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THE POEMS OF
ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

WORKS BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

ILLUSTRATED EDITION.

THE WHITE COMPANY. | MICAH CLARKE.
THE REFUGEES. | RODNEY STONE.
UNCLE BERNAC: A MEMORY OF THE EMPIRE.
ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.
MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.
THE SIGN OF FOUR. | SIR NIGEL.
EXPLOITS OF BRIGADIER GERARD.
CAPTAIN OF THE POLESTAR.
ROUND THE RED LAMP.
THE STARK MUNRO LETTERS.
THE TRAGEDY OF THE "KOROSKO."
A DUET, WITH AN OCCASIONAL CHORUS.
THE GREEN FLAG, AND OTHER STORIES.
ADVENTURES OF GERARD.
THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES.
RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.
THROUGH THE MAGIC DOOR.
ROUND THE FIRE STORIES.
THE LAST GALLEY. | THE LOST WORLD.

CROWN 8vo.

HIS LAST BOW. | THE VALLEY OF FEAR.
DANGER! AND OTHER STORIES.

MURRAY'S CHEAP FICTION LIBRARY.

ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.
MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.
EXPLOITS OF BRIGADIER GERARD.
THE WHITE COMPANY. | RODNEY STONE.
HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES.
THE SIGN OF FOUR. | HIS LAST BOW.
ADVENTURES OF GERARD. | SIR NIGEL.

THE CONAN DOYLE STORIES.

TALES OF THE RING AND CAMP.
TALES OF PIRATES AND BLUE WATER.
TALES OF TERROR AND MYSTERY.
TALES OF TWILIGHT AND THE UNSEEN.
TALES OF ADVENTURE AND MEDICAL LIFE.
TALES OF LONG AGO.

THREE VOLUMES OF VERSE.

SONGS OF ACTION. | SONGS OF THE ROAD.
THE GUARDS CAME THROUGH.

THE POEMS OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

COLLECTED EDITION



LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1922

no viii
quoniam

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TO
J. C. D.
THIS—AND ALL

February 1911

571170

FOREWORD

IF it were not for the hillocks
You'd think little of the hills ;
The rivers would seem tiny
If it were not for the rills.
If you never saw the brushwood
You would under-rate the trees ;
And so you see the purpose
Of such little rhymes as these.

PREFACE

THIS volume contains nearly the whole of the three small collections named "Songs of Action," "Songs of the Road," and "The Guards came through." To these are added a number of new pieces: "The Farewell," "Now then, Smith!" "To my Lady," "A Reminiscence of Cricket," "The Bugles of Canada," "Christmas in Trouble," "To Carlo," "To Ronald Ross," "Little Billy," "Take Heart," "Retrospect," and "Comrades." There is also added a short poetical one-act play, "The Journey."

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

March 1922

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Songs of Action

The Song of the Bow

WHAT of the bow ?
The bow was made in England :
Of true wood, of yew-wood,
The wood of English bows ;
So men who are free
Love the old yew-tree
And the land where the yew-tree grows.

What of the cord ?
The cord was made in England :
A rough cord, a tough cord,
A cord that bowmen love ;
And so we will sing
Of the hempen string
And the land where the cord was wove.

What of the shaft ?
The shaft was cut in England :
A long shaft, a strong shaft,
Barbed and trim and true ;
So we'll drink all together
To the grey goose-feather
And the land where the grey goose flew.

What of the mark ?

Ah, seek it not in England,

A bold mark, our old mark

Is waiting over-sea.

When the strings harp in chorus,

And the lion flag is o'er us,

It is there that our mark will be.

What of the men ?

The men were bred in England :

The bowmen—the yeomen,

The lads of dale and fell.

Here's to you—and to you !

To the hearts that are true

And the land where the true hearts dwell.

Cremona

[The French Army, including a part of the Irish Brigade, under Marshal Villeroy, held the fortified town of Cremona during the winter of 1702. Prince Eugène, with the Imperial Army, surprised it one morning, and, owing to the treachery of a priest, occupied the whole city before the alarm was given. Villeroy was captured, together with many of the French garrison. The Irish, however, consisting of the regiments of Dillon and of Burke, held a fort commanding the river gate, and defended themselves all day, in spite of Prince Eugène's efforts to win them over to his cause. Eventually Eugène, being unable to take the post, was compelled to withdraw from the city.]

THE Grenadiers of Austria are proper men and tall ;
The Grenadiers of Austria have scaled the city
wall ;
They have marched from far away
Ere the dawning of the day,
And the morning saw them masters of Cremona.

There's not a man to whisper, there's not a horse to
neigh,
Of the footmen of Lorraine and the riders of Duprés ;
They have crept up every street,
In the market-place they meet,
They are holding every vantage in Cremona.

The Marshal Villeroy he has started from his bed ;
The Marshal Villeroy has no wig upon his head ;
 “ I have lost my men ! ” quoth he,
 “ And my men they have lost me,
And I sorely fear we both have lost Cremona.”

Prince Eugène of Austria is in the market-place ;
Prince Eugène of Austria has smiles upon his face ;
 Says he, “ Our work is done,
 For the Citadel is won,
And the black and yellow flag flies o’er Cremona.”

Major Dan O’Mahony is in the barrack square,
And just six hundred Irish lads are waiting for him there ;
 Says he, “ Come in your shirt,
 And you won’t take any hurt,
For the morning air is pleasant in Cremona.”

Major Dan O’Mahony is at the barrack gate,
And just six hundred Irish lads will neither stay nor wait ;
 There’s Dillon and there’s Burke,
 And there’ll be some bloody work
Ere the Kaiserlics shall boast they hold Cremona.

Major Dan O’Mahony has reached the river fort,
And just six hundred Irish lads are joining in the sport ;
 “ Come, take a hand ! ” says he,
 “ And if you will stand by me,
Then it’s glory to the man who takes Cremona ! ”

Prince Eugène of Austria has frowns upon his face,
And loud he calls his Galloper of Irish blood and race :

“ MacDonnell, ride, I pray,
To your countrymen, and say
That only they are left in all Cremona ! ”

MacDonnell he has reined his mare beside the river dyke,
And he has tied the parley flag upon a sergeant's pike ;
Six companies were there
From Limerick and Clare,
The last of all the guardians of Cremona.

“ Now, Major Dan O'Mahony, give up the river gate,
Or, Major Dan O'Mahony, you'll find it is too late ;
For when I gallop back
'Tis the signal for attack,
And no quarter for the Irish in Cremona ! ”

And Major Dan he laughed : “ Faith, if what you say
be true,
And if they will not come until they hear again from you,
Then there will be no attack,
For you're never going back,
And we'll keep you snug and safely in Cremona.”

All the weary day the German stormers came,
All the weary day they were faced by fire and flame,
They have filled the ditch with dead,
And the river's running red ;
But they cannot win the gateway of Cremona.

All the weary day, again, again, again,
The horsemen of Duprés and the footmen of Lorraine,
 Taafe and Herberstein,
 And the riders of the Rhine ;
It's a mighty price they're paying for Cremona.

Time and time they came with the deep-mouthed German
 roar,
Time and time they broke like the wave upon the shore ;
 For better men were there
 From Limerick and Clare,
And who will take the gateway of Cremona ?

Prince Eugène has watched, and he gnaws his nether lip ;
Prince Eugène has cursed as he saw his chances slip :
 " Call off ! Call off ! " he cried,
 " It is nearing eventide,
And I fear our work is finished in Cremona."

Says Wauchop to McAulliffe, " Their fire is growing
 slack."
Says Major Dan O'Mahony, " It is their last attack ;
 But who will stop the game
 While there's light to play the same,
And to walk a short way with them from Cremona ? "

And so they snarl behind them, and beg them turn and
 come,
They have taken Neuberg's standard, they have taken
 Diak's drum ;

And along the winding Po,
Beard on shoulder, stern and slow
The Kaiserlics are riding from Cremona.

Just two hundred Irish lads are shouting on the wall ;
Four hundred more are lying who can hear no slogan
call ;

But what's the odds of that,
For it's all the same to Pat
If he pays his debt in Dublin or Cremona.

Says General de Vaudray, "You've done a soldier's
work !

And every tongue in France shall talk of Dillon and of
Burke !

Ask what you will this day,
And be it what it may,
It is granted to the heroes of Cremona."

"Why, then," says Dan O'Mahony, "one favour we
entreat,

We were called a little early, and our toilet's not com-
plete ;

We've no quarrel with the shirt,
But the breeches wouldn't hurt,
For the evening air is chilly in Cremona."

The Storming Party

S AID Paul Leroy to Barrow,
“ Though the breach is steep and narrow,
If we only gain the summit
Then it's odds we hold the fort.
I have ten and you have twenty,
And the thirty should be plenty,
With Henderson and Henty
And McDermott in support.”

Said Barrow to Leroy,
“ It's a solid job, my boy,
For they've flanked it, and they've banked it,
And they've bored it with a mine.
But it's only fifty paces
Ere we look them in the faces ;
And the men are in their places,
With their toes upon the line.”

Said Paul Leroy to Barrow,
“ See that first ray, like an arrow,
How it tinges all the fringes
Of the sullen drifting skies.

They told me to begin it
At five-thirty to the minute,
And at thirty-one I'm in it,
Or my sub will get his rise.

"So we'll wait the signal rocket,
Till . . . Barrow, show that locket,
That turquoise-studded locket,
Which you slipped from out your pocket
And are pressing with a kiss !
Turquoise-studded, spiral-twisted,
It is hers ! And I had missed it
From her chain ; and you have kissed it :
Barrow, villain, what is this ? "

"Leroy, I had a warning,
That my time has come this morning,
So I speak with frankness, scorning
To deny the thing that's true.
Yes, it's Amy's, is the trinket,
Little turquoise-studded trinket,
Not her gift—oh, never think it !
For her thoughts were all for you.

"As we danced I gently drew it
From her chain—she never knew it,
But I love her—yes, I love her :
I am candid, I confess.
But I never told her, never,
For I knew 'twas vain endeavour,
And she loved you—loved you ever,
Would to God she loved you less ! "

“ Barrow, Barrow, you shall pay me !

Me, your comrade, to betray me !

Well I know that little Amy

Is as true as wife can be.

She to give this love-badged locket !

She had rather . . . Ha, the rocket !

Hi, McDougall ! Sound the bugle !

Yorkshires, Yorkshires, follow me ! ”

.

Said Paul Leroy to Amy,

“ Well, wife, you may blame me,

For my passion overcame me,

When he told me of his shame ;

But when I saw him lying,

Dead amid a ring of dying,

Why, poor devil, I was trying

To forget, and not to blame.

“ And this locket, I unclasped it

From the fingers that still grasped it ;

He told me how he got it,

How he stole it in a valse.”

And she listened leaden-hearted :

Oh, the weary day they parted !

For she loved him—yes, she loved him—

For his youth and for his truth,

And for those dying words, so false.

The Frontier Line

WHAT marks the frontier line ?
Thou man of India, say !

Is it the Himalayas sheer,
The rocks and valleys of Cashmere,
Or Indus as she seeks the south
From Attoch to the fivefold mouth ?

“ Not that ! Not that ! ”

Then answer me, I pray !
What marks the frontier line ?

What marks the frontier line ?
Thou man of Burmah, speak !
Is it traced from Mandalay,
And down the marches of Cathay,
From Bhamo south to Kiang-mai,
And where the buried rubies lie ?

“ Not that ! Not that ! ”

Then tell me what I seek :
What marks the frontier line ?

What marks the frontier line ?
Thou Africander, say !
Is it shown by Zulu kraal,
By Drakensberg or winding Vaal,

Or where the Shiré waters seek
Their outlet east at Mozambique ?

“Not that ! Not that !

There is a surer way
To mark the frontier line.”

What marks the frontier line ?

Thou man of Egypt, tell !

Is it traced on Luxor’s sand,
Where Karnak’s painted pillars stand,
Or where the river runs between
The Ethiop and Bishareen ?

“Not that ! Not that !

By neither stream nor well
We mark the frontier line.

“But be it east or west,

One common sign we bear,

The tongue may change, the soil, the sky,
But where your British brothers lie,
The lonely cairn, the nameless grave,
Still fringe the flowing Saxon wave.

’Tis that ! ’Tis where

They lie—the men who placed it there,
That marks the frontier line.”

Corporal Dick's Promotion

A BALLAD OF '82

THE Eastern day was well-nigh o'er
When, parched with thirst and travel sore,
Two of McPherson's flanking corps
Across the Desert were tramping.
They had wandered off from the beaten track
And now were wearily harking back,
Ever staring round for the signal jack
That marked their comrades camping.

The one was Corporal Robert Dick,
Bearded and burly, short and thick,
Rough of speech and in temper quick,
A hard-faced old rascalion.
The other, fresh from the barrack square,
Was a raw recruit, smooth-cheeked and fair,
Half grown, half drilled, with the weedy air
Of a draft from the home battalion.

Weary and parched and hunger-torn
They had wandered on from early morn,
And the young boy-soldier limped forlorn,
Now stumbling and now falling.

Around the orange sand-curves lay,
Flecked with boulders, black or grey,
Death-silent, save that far away
A kite was shrilly calling.

A kite ? Was *that* a kite ? The yell
That shrilly rose and faintly fell ?
No kite's, and yet the kite knows well
The long-drawn wild halloo.
And right athwart the evening sky
The yellow sand-spray spurtled high,
And shrill and shriller swelled the cry
Of " Allah ! Allahu ! "

The Corporal peered at the crimson West,
Hid his pipe in his khaki vest,
Growled out an oath and onward pressed,
Still glancing over his shoulder.
" Bedouins, mate ! " he curtly said ;
" We'll find some work for steel and lead,
And maybe sleep in a sandy bed,
Before we're one hour older.

" But just one flutter before we're done.
Stiffen your lip and stand, my son ;
We'll take this bloomin' circus on :
Ball-cartridge load ! Now, steady ! "
With a curse and a prayer the two faced round,
Dogged and grim they stood their ground,
And their breech-blocks snapped with a crisp
clean sound
As the rifles sprang to the " ready."

Alas for the Emir Ali Khan !
A hundred paces before his clan,
That ebony steed of the Prophet's breed
 Is the foal of death and of danger.
A spurt of fire, a gasp of pain,
A bluish blur on the yellow plain,
The chief was down, and his bridle rein
 Was in the grip of the stranger.

With the light of hope on his rugged face,
The Corporal sprang to the dead man's place,
One prick with the steel, one thrust with the
 heel,
 And where was the man to outride him ?
A grip of his knees, a toss of his rein,
He was settling her down to her gallop again,
When he stopped, for he heard just one faltering
 word
 From the young recruit beside him.

One faltering word from pal to pal,
But it found the heart of the Corporal.
He had sprung to the sand, he had lent him a
 hand,
 "Up, mate ! They'll be 'ere in a minute ;
Off with you ! No palaver ! Go !
I'll bide be'ind and run this show.
Promotion has been cursed slow,
 And this is my chance to win it."

Into the saddle he thrust him quick,
Spurred the black mare with a bayonet prick.
Watched her gallop with plunge and with kick
 Away o'er the desert careering.
Then he turned with a softened face,
And loosened the strap of his cartridge-case,
While his thoughts flew back to the dear old place
 In the sunny Hampshire clearing.

The young boy-private, glancing back,
Saw the Bedouins' wild attack,
And heard the sharp Martini crack.
 But as he gazed, already
The fierce fanatic Arab band
Was closing in on every hand,
Until one tawny swirl of sand,
 Concealed them in its eddy.

.

A squadron of British horse that night,
Galloping hard in the shadowy light,
Came on the scene of that last stern fight,
 And found the Corporal lying
Silent and grim on the trampled sand,
His rifle grasped in his stiffened hand,
With the warrior pride of one who died
 'Mid a ring of the dead and the dying.

And still when twilight shadows fall,
After the evening bugle call,

In bivouac or in barrack-hall,
His comrades speak of the Corporal,
His death and his devotion.
And there are some who like to say
That perhaps a hidden meaning lay
In the words he spoke, and that the day
When his rough bold spirit passed away
Was the day that he won promotion.

A Forgotten Tale

[The scene of this ancient fight, recorded by Froissart, is still called "Altura de los Inglesos." Five hundred years later Wellington's soldiers were fighting on the same ground.]

"SAY, what saw you on the hill,
Campesino Garcia ?"

"I saw my brindled heifer there,
A trail of bowmen, spent and bare,
And a little man on a sorrel mare
Riding slow before them."

"Say, what saw you in the vale,
Campesino Garcia ?"

"There I saw my lambing ewe
And an army riding through,
Thick and brave the pennons flew
From the lances o'er them."

"Then what saw you on the hill,
Campesino Garcia ?"

"I saw beside the milking byre,
White with want and black with mire,
The little man with eyes afire
Marshalling his bowmen."

“ Then what saw you in the vale,
Campesino Garcia ? ”

“ There I saw my bullocks twain,
And amid my uncut grain
All the hardy men of Spain
Spurring for their foemen.”

“ Nay, but there is more to tell,
Campesino Garcia ! ”

“ I could not bide the end to view ;
I had graver things to do,
Tending on the lambing ewe
Down among the clover.”

“ Ah, but tell me what you heard,
Campesino Garcia ! ”

“ Shouting from the mountain-side,
Shouting until eventide ;
But it dwindled and it died
Ere milking time was over.”

“ Nay, but saw you nothing more,
Campesino Garcia ? ”

“ Yes, I saw them lying there,
The little man and sorrel mare ;
And in their ranks the bowmen fair,
With their staves before them.”

“ And the hardy men of Spain,
Campesino Garcia ? ”

“ Hush ! but we are Spanish too ;
More I may not say to you :
May God’s benison, like dew,
Gently settle o’er them.”

Pennarby Mine

PENNARBY shaft is dark and steep,
Eight foot wide, eight hundred deep.
Stout the bucket and tough the cord,
Strong as the arm of Winchman Ford.

“Never look down !

Stick to the line !”

That was the saying at Pennarby mine.

A stranger came to Pennarby shaft.
Lord, to see how the miners laughed !
White in the collar and stiff in the hat,
With his patent boots and his silk cravat,
Picking his way,
Dainty and fine,
Stepping on tiptoe to Pennarby mine.

Touring from London, so he said.
Was it copper they dug for ? or gold ? or lead ?
Where did they find it ? How did it come ?
If he tried with a shovel might *he* get some ?
Stooping so much
Was bad for the spine ;
And wasn't it warmish in Pennarby mine ?

'Twas like two worlds that met that day—
The world of work and the world of play ;
And the grimy lads from the reeking shaft
Nudged each other and grinned and chaffed.

“ Got 'em all out ! ”

“ A cousin of mine ! ”

So ran the banter at Pennarby mine.

And Carnbrae Bob, the Pennarby wit,
Told him the facts about the pit :
How they bored the shaft till the brimstone smell
Warned them off from tapping—well,
He wouldn't say what,
But they took it as sign
To dig no deeper in Pennarby mine.

Then leaning over and peering in,
He was pointing out what he said was tin
In the ten-foot lode—a crash ! a jar !
A grasping hand and a splintered bar.
Gone in his strength,
With the lips that laughed—
Oh, the pale faces round Pennarby shaft !

Far down on a narrow ledge,
They saw him cling to the crumbling edge.
“ Wait for the bucket ! Hi, man ! Stay !
That rope ain't safe ! It's worn away !
He's taking his chance,
Slack out the line !
Sweet Lord be with him ! ” cried Pennarby mine.

“ He’s got him ! He has him ! Pull with a will !
Thank God ! He’s over and breathing still.
And he—Lord’s sakes now ! What’s that ? Well !
Blowed if it ain’t our London swell.

Your heart is right

If your coat *is* fine :

Give us your hand ! ” cried Pennarby mine.

A Rover Chanty

A TRADER sailed from Stepney town—
Wake her up! Shake her up! Try her with the
mainsail!

A trader sailed from Stepney town
With a keg full of gold and a velvet gown :
Ho, the bully rover Jack,
Waiting with his yard aback
Out upon the Lowland sea !

The trader he had a daughter fair—
Wake her up! Shake her up! Try her with the foresail!
The trader he had a daughter fair,
She had gold in her ears, and gold in her hair :
All for bully rover Jack,
Waiting with his yard aback,
Out upon the Lowland sea !

“ Alas the day, oh daughter mine ! ”—
Shake her up! Wake her up! Try her with the topsail !
“ Alas the day, oh daughter mine !
Yon red, red flag is a fearsome sign ! ”
Ho, the bully rover Jack,
Reaching on the weather tack,
Out upon the Lowland sea !

“ A fearsome flag ! ” the maiden cried—
Wake her up ! Shake her up ! Try her with the jibsail !
“ A fearsome flag ! ” the maiden cried,
“ But comelier men I never have spied ! ”
 Ho, the bully rover Jack,
 Reaching on the weather tack,
Out upon the Lowland sea !

There's a wooden path that the rovers know—
Wake her up ! Shake her up ! Try her with the headsails !
There's a wooden path that the rovers know,
Where none come back, though many must go :
 Ho, the bully rover Jack,
 Lying with his yard aback,
Out upon the Lowland sea !

Where is the trader of Stepney town ?—
Wake her up ! Shake her up ! Every stick a-bending !
Where is the trader of Stepney town ?
There's gold on the capstan, and blood on the gown :
 Ho for bully rover Jack,
 Waiting with his yard aback,
Out upon the Lowland sea !

Where is the maiden who knelt at his side ?—
Wake her up ! Shake her up ! Every stitch a-drawing !
Where is the maiden who knelt at his side ?
We gowned her in scarlet, and chose her our bride :
 Ho, the bully rover Jack,
 Reaching on the weather tack,
Right across the Lowland sea !

So it's up and its over to Stornoway Bay,
Pack it on ! Crack it on ! Try her with the stunsails !
It's off on a bowline to Stornoway Bay,
Where the liquor is good and the lasses are gay :
 Waiting for their bully Jack,
 Watching for him sailing back,
Right across the Lowland sea.

A Ballad of the Ranks

WHO carries the gun ?
A lad from over the Tweed.
Then let him go, for well we know
He comes of a soldier breed.
So drink together to rock and heather,
Out where the red deer run,
And stand aside for Scotland's pride—
The man that carries the gun !
For the Colonel rides before,
The Major's on the flank,
The Captains and the Adjutant
Are in the foremost rank.
But when it's " Action front ! "
And fighting's to be done,
Come one, come all, you stand or fall
By the man who holds the gun.

Who carries the gun ?
A lad from a Yorkshire dale.
Then let him go, for well we know
The heart that never will fail.
Here's to the fire of Lancashire,
And here's to her soldier son !
For the hard-bit north has sent him forth—
The lad that carries the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from a Midland shire.

Then let him go, for well we know

He comes of an English sire.

Here's a glass to a Midland lass,

And each can choose the one,

But east and west we claim the best

For the man that carries the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from the hills of Wales.

Then let him go, for well we know,

That Taffy is hard as nails.

There are several ll's in the place where he dwells,

And of w's more than one,

With a "Llan" and a "pen," but it breeds good men,

And it's they who carry the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from the windy west.

Then let him go, for well we know

That he is one of the best.

There's Bristol rough, and Gloucester tough,

And Devon yields to none.

Or you may get in Somerset

Your lad to carry the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from London town.

Then let him go, for well we know

The stuff that never backs down.

He has learned to joke at the powder smoke,
For he is the fog-smoke's son,
And his heart is light and his pluck is right—
The man who carries the gun.

Who carries the gun ?
A lad from the Emerald Isle.
Then let him go, for well we know,
We've tried him many a while.
We've tried him east, we've tried him west,
We've tried him sea and land,
But the man to beat old Erin's best
Has never yet been planned.

Who carries the gun ?
It's you, and you, and you ;
So let us go, and we won't say no
If they give us a job to do.
Here we stand with a cross-linked hand,
Comrades every one ;
So one last cup, and drink it up
To the man who carries the gun !
For the Colonel rides before,
The Major's on the flank,
The Captains and the Adjutant
Are in the foremost rank.
And when it's " Action front ! "
And there's fighting to be done,
Come one, come all, you stand or fall
By the man who holds the gun.

A Lay of the Links

I T'S up and away from our work to-day,
For the breeze sweeps over the down ;
And it's hey for a game where the gorse blossoms flame,
And the bracken is bronzing to brown.
With the turf 'neath our tread and the blue overhead,
And the song of the lark in the whin ;
There's the flag and the green, with the bunkers
between—
Now will you be over or in ?

The doctor may come, and we'll teach him to know
A tee where no tannin can lurk ;
The soldier may come, and we'll promise to show
Some hazards a soldier may shirk ;
The statesman may joke, as he tops every stroke,
That at last he is high in his aims ;
And the clubman will stand with a club in his hand
That is worth every club in St. James'.

The palm and the leather come rarely together,
Gripping the driver's haft,
And it's good to feel the jar of the steel
And the spring of the hickory shaft.

Why trouble or seek for the praise of a clique ?
A cleek here is common to all ;
And the lie that might sting is a very small thing
When compared with the lie of the ball.

Come youth and come age, from the study or stage,
From Bar or from Bench—high and low !
A green you must use as a cure for the blues—
You drive them away as you go.
We're outward bound on a long, long round,
And it's time to be up and away :
If worry and sorrow come back with the morrow,
At least we'll be happy to-day.

The Dying Whip

I T came from gettin' 'eated, that was 'ow the thing
begun,
And 'ackin' back to kennels from a ninety-minute run ;
"I guess I've copped brownchitis," says I to brother Jack,
An' then afore I knowed it I was down upon my back.

At night there came a sweatin' as left me deadly weak,
And my throat was sort of tickly an' it 'urt me for to
speak ;
An' then there came an 'ackin' cough as wouldn't leave
alone,
An' then afore I knowed it I was only skin and bone.

I never was a 'eavy weight. I scaled at seven four,
An' rode at eight, or maybe at just a trifle more ;
And now I'll stake my davy I wouldn't scale at five,
And I'd 'old my own at catch-weights with the skinniest
jock alive.

And the doctor says the reason why I sit an' cough an'
wheeze
Is all along o' varmint, like the cheese-mites in the
cheese ;
The smallest kind o' varmint, but varmint all the same,
Microscopes or somethin'—I forget the varmint's name.

But I knows as I'm a goner. They never said as much,
But I reads the people's faces, and I knows as I am
such ;

Well, there's 'Urst to mind the 'orses, and the 'ounds
can look to Jack,

Though 'e never was a patch on me in 'andlin' of a
pack.

You'll maybe think I'm boastin', but you'll find they
all agree

That there's not a whip in Surrey as can 'andle 'ounds
like me ;

For I knew 'em all from puppies, and I'd tell 'em without
fail—

If I seed a tail a-waggin', I could tell who wagged the tail.

And voices—why, Lor' love you, it's more than I
can 'elp,

It just comes kind of natural to know each whine an'
yelp ;

You might take them twenty couple where you will and
let 'em run,

An' I'd listen by the coverside and name 'em one by one.

I say it's kind of natural, for since I was a brat

I never cared for readin' books, or fancy things like
that :

But give me 'ounds and 'orses an' I was quite content,
An' I loved to 'ear 'em talkin' and to wonder what they
meant.

And when the 'ydrophoby came five year ago next
May,

When Nailer was be'avin' in a most owdacious way,
I fixed 'im so's 'e couldn't bite, my 'ands on neck an'
back,

An' I 'eaved 'im from the kennels, and they say I saved
the pack.

An' when the Master 'eard of it, 'e up an' says, says 'e,
"If that chap were a soldier man, they'd give 'im the
V.C."

Which is some kind o' medal what they give to soldier
men ;

An' Master said if I were such I would 'a' got it then.

Parson brought 'is Bible and come to read to me ;
"'Ave what you like, there's everythink within this
Book," says 'e.

Says I, "They've left the 'orses out !" Says 'e, "You
are mistook ;"

An' 'e up an' read a 'eap of things about them from the
Book.

And some of it amazin' fine ; although I'm fit to swear
No 'orse would ever say "Ah, ah !" same as they said
it there.

Per'aps it was an 'Ebrew 'orse the chap 'ad in his
mind,

But I never 'eard an English 'orse say nothin' of the
kind.

Parson is a good 'un. I've known 'im from a lad ;
'Twas me as taught 'im ridin', an' 'e rides uncommon
bad ;
And he says—— But 'ark an' listen ! There's an
'orn ! I 'eard it blow ;
Pull the blind from off the winder ! Prop me up, and
'old me so.

They're drawin' the black 'anger, just aside the Squire's
grounds.
'Ark and listen ! 'Ark and listen ! There's the yappin'
of the 'ounds :
There's Fanny and Beltinker, and I 'ear old Boxer call ;
You see I wasn't boastin' when I said I knew 'em all.

Let me sit an' 'old the bedrail ! Now I see 'em as they
pass :
There's Squire upon the Midland mare, a good 'un on
the grass ;
But this is closish country, and you wants a clever 'orse
When 'alf the time you're in the woods an' 'alf among
the gorse.

'Ark to Jack a'ollering—a-bleatin' like a lamb.
You wouldn't think it now, perhaps, to see the thing
I am,
But there was a time the ladies used to linger at the
meet
Just to 'ear me callin' in the woods : my callin' was so
sweet.

I see the crossroads corner, with the field awaitin' there,
There's Purcell on 'is piebald 'orse, an' Doctor on the
mare,
And the Master on 'is iron grey ; she isn't much to look,
But I seed 'er do clean twenty foot across the 'eathly
brook.

There's Captain Kane an' McIntyre an' 'alf a dozen
more,
And two or three are 'untin' whom I never seed afore ;
Likely-lookin' chaps they be, well groomed and 'orsed
and dressed—
I wish they could 'a seen the pack when it was at its best.

It's a check, and they are drawin' down the coppice for
a scent,
You can see as they've been runnin', for the 'orses they
are spent ;
I'll lay the fox will break this way, downwind as sure
as fate,
An' if he does you'll see the field come poundin' through
our gate.

But, Maggie, what's that slinkin' beside the cover ?—
See !
Now it's in the clover field, and goin' fast an' free,
It's 'im, and they don't see 'im. It's 'im ! 'Alloo !
'Alloo !
My broken wind won't run to it—I'll leave the job to
you.

There now I 'ear the music, and I know they're on his track ;

Oh, watch 'em, Maggie, watch 'em ! Ain't they just a lovely pack !

I've nursed 'em through distemper, an' I've trained an' broke 'em in,

An' my 'eart it just goes out to them as if they was my kin.

Well, all things 'as an endin', as I've 'eard the parson say,
The 'orse is cast, an' the 'ound is past, an' the 'unter
'as 'is day ;

But my day was yesterday, so lay me down again.

You can draw the curtain, Maggie, right across the
winder pane.

Master

MASTER went a-hunting,
When the leaves were falling ;
We saw him on the bridle path,
We heard him gaily calling.

“ Oh, master, master, come you back,
For I have dreamed a dream so black ! ”
A glint of steel from bit and heel,
The chestnut cantered faster ;
A red flash seen amid the green,
And so good-bye to master.

Master came from hunting,
Two silent comrades bore him ;
His eyes were dim, his face was white,
The mare was led before him.
“ Oh, master, master, is it thus
That you have come again to us ? ”
I held my lady's ice-cold hand,
They bore the hurdle past her ;
Why should they go so soft and slow ?
It matters not to master.

H.M.S. "Foudroyant"

[Being an humble address to Her Majesty's Naval advisers, who sold Nelson's old flagship to the Germans for a thousand pounds.]

WHO says the Nation's purse is lean,
Who fears for claim or bond or debt,
When all the glories that have been
Are scheduled as a cash asset ?
If times are black and trade is slack,
If coal and cotton fail at last,
We've something left to barter yet—
Our glorious past.

There's many a crypt in which lies hid
The dust of statesman or of king ;
There's Shakespeare's home to raise a bid,
And Milton's house its price would bring.
What for the sword that Cromwell drew ?
What for Prince Edward's coat of mail ?
What for our Saxon Alfred's tomb ?
They're all for sale !

And stone and marble may be sold
Which serve no present daily need ;
There's Edward's Windsor, labelled old,
And Wolsey's palace, guaranteed.

St. Clement Danes and fifty fanes,
The Tower and the Temple grounds ;
How much for these ? Just price them, please,
In British pounds.

You hucksters, have you still to learn,
The things which money will not buy ?
Can you not read that, cold and stern
As we may be, there still does lie
Deep in our hearts a hungry love
For what concerns our island story ?
We sell our work—perchance our lives,
But not our glory.

Go barter to the knacker's yard
The steed that has outlived its time !
Send hungry to the pauper ward
The man who served you in his prime !
But when you touch the Nation's store,
Be broad your mind and tight your grip.
Take heed ! And bring us back once more
Our Nelson's ship.

And if no mooring can be found
In all our harbours near or far,
Then tow the old three-decker round
To where the deep-sea soundings are ;
There, with her pennon flying clear,
And with her ensign lashed peak high,
Sink her a thousand fathoms sheer.
There let her lie !

The Farnshire Cup

C HRISTOPHER DAVIS was up upon Mavis
And Sammy MacGregor on Flo,
Jo Chauncy rode Spider, the rankest outsider,
But *he'd* make a wooden horse go.
There was Robin and Leah and Boadicea,
And Chesterfield's Son of the Sea ;
And Irish Nuneaton, who never was beaten,
They backed her at seven to three.

The course was the devil ! A start on the level,
And then a stiff breather uphill ;
A bank at the top with a four-foot drop,
And a bullfinch down by the mill.
A stretch of straight from the Whittlesea gate,
Then up and down and up ;
And the mounts that stay through Farnshire clay
May bid for the Farnshire Cup.

The tipsters were touting, the bookies were shouting
" Bar one, bar one, bar one ! "
With a glint and a glimmer of silken shimmer
The field shone bright in the sun,
When Farmer Brown came riding down :
" I hain't much time to spare,
But I've entered her name, so I'll play out the game,
On the back o' my old grey mare.

“ You never would think ’er a thoroughbred clinker,
There’s never a judge that would ;
Each leg be’ind ’as a splint, you’ll find,
And the fore are none too good.
She roars a bit, and she don’t look fit,
She’s moulted ’alf ’er ’air ;
But——” He smiled in a way that seemed to say,
That he knew that old grey mare.

And the bookies laughed and the bookies chaffed,
“ Who backs the mare ? ” cried they.
“ A hundred to one ! ” “ It’s done—and done ! ”
“ We’ll take that price all day.”
“ What if the mare is shedding hair !
What if her eye is wild !
We read her worth and her pedigree birth
In the smile that her owner smiled.”

And the whisper grew and the whisper flew
That she came of Isonomy stock.
“ Fifty to one ! ” “ It’s done—and done !
Look at her haunch and hock !
Ill-groomed ! Why yes, but one may guess
That that is her owner’s guile.”
Ah, Farmer Brown, the sharps from town,
Have read your simple smile !

They’ve weighed him in. “ Now lose or win,
I’ve money at stake this day ;
Gee-long, my sweet, and if we’re beat,
We’ll both do all we may ! ”

He joins the rest, they line abreast,
 "Back Leah! Mavis up!"
The flag is dipped and the field is slipped,
 Full split for the Farnshire Cup.

Christopher Davis is leading on Mavis,
 Spider is waiting on Flo,
Boadicea is gaining on Leah,
 Irish Nuneaton lies low,
Robin is tailing, his wind has been failing,
 Son of the Sea's going fast:
So crack on the pace for it's anyone's race,
 And the winner's the horse that can last.

Chestnut and bay, and sorrel and grey,
 See how they glimmer and gleam!
Bending and straining, and losing and gaining,
 Silk jackets flutter and stream;
They are over the grass as the cloud shadows pass,
 They are up to the fence at the top;
It's "Hey then!" and over, and into the clover,
 There wasn't one slip at the drop.

They are all going still, they are round by the mill,
 They are down by the Whittlesea gate;
Leah's complaining, and Mavis is gaining,
 And Flo's catching up in the straight.
Robin's gone wrong, but the Spider runs strong,
 He sticks to the leader like wax;
An utter outsider, but look at his rider—
 Jo Chauncy, the pick of the cracks!

Robin was tailing and pecked at a paling,
Leah's gone weak in her feet,
Boadicea came down at the railing,
Son of the Sea is dead beat.
Leather to leather, they're pounding together,
Three of them all in a row,
And Irish Nuneaton, who never was beaten,
Is level with Spider and Flo.

It's into the straight from the Whittlesea gate,
Clean galloping over the green,
But four foot high the hurdles lie
With a sunken ditch between.
'Tis a bit of a test for a beast at its best,
And the devil and all at its worst ;
But it's clear run in with the Cup to win
For the horse that is over it first.

So try it, my beauties, and fly it, my beauties,
Spider, Nuneaton, and Flo ;
With a trip and a blunder there's one of them under,
Hark to it crashing below !
Is it the brown or the sorrel that's down ?
The brown ! It is Flo who is in !
And Spider with Chauncy, the pick of the fancy,
Is going full split for a win.

“ Spider is winning ! ” “ Jo Chauncy is winning ! ”
“ He's winning ! He's winning ! Bravo ! ”
The bookies are raving, the ladies are waving,
The Stand is all shouting for Jo.

The horse is clean done, but the race may be won
By the Newmarket lad on his back ;
For the fire of the rider may bring an outsider
Ahead of a thoroughbred crack.

“ Spider is winning ! ” “ Jo Chauncy is winning ! ”
It swells like the roar of the sea ;
But Jo hears the drumming of somebody coming,
And sees a lean head by his knee.
“ Nuneaton ! Nuneaton ! The Spider is beaten ! ”
It is but a spurt at the most ;
For lose it or win it, they have but a minute
Before they are up with the post.

Nuneaton is straining, Nuneaton is gaining,
Neither will falter nor flinch ;
Whips they are plying and jackets are flying,
They’re fairly abreast to an inch.
“ Crack ’em up ! Let ’em go ! Well ridden ! Bravo ! ”
Gamer ones never were bred ;
Jo Chauncy has done it ! He’s spurted ! He’s won it ! ”
The favourite’s beat by a head !

Don’t tell me of luck, for its judgment and pluck
And a courage that never will shirk ;
To give your mind to it and know how to do it
And put all your heart in your work.
So here’s to the Spider, the winning outsider,
With little Jo Chauncy up ;
May they stay life’s course, both jockey and horse,
As they stayed in the Farnshire Cup.

But it's possible that you are wondering what
 May have happened to Farmer Brown,
And the old grey crock of Isonomy stock
 Who was backed by the sharps from town.
She blew and she sneezed, she coughed and she wheezed,
 She ran till her knees gave way.
But never a grumble at trip or at stumble
 Was heard from her jock that day.

For somebody laid *against* the grey,
 And somebody made a pile ;
And Brown says he can make farming pay,
 And he smiles a simple smile :
“ Them sharps from town were riled,” says Brown,
 “ But I can't see why—can you ?
For I said quite fair as I knew that mare,
 And I proved my words was true.”

The Groom's Story

TEN mile in twenty minutes ! 'E done it, sir. That's true.

The big bay 'orse in the further stall—the one wot's next to you.

I've seen some better 'orses ; I've seldom seen a wuss, But 'e 'olds the bloomin' record, an' that's good enough for us.

We knew as it was in 'im. 'E's thoroughbred, three part, We bought 'im for to race 'im, but we found 'e 'ad no 'cart ;

For 'e was sad and thoughtful, and amazin' dignified, It seemed a kind o' liberty to drive 'im or to ride ;

For 'e never seemed a-thinkin' of what 'e 'ad to do, But 'is thoughts was set on 'igher things, admirin' of the view.

'E looked a puffleck pictur, and a pictur 'e would stay, 'E wouldn't even switch 'is tail to drive the flies away.

And yet we knew 'twas in 'im ; we knew as 'e could fly ; But what we couldn't git at was 'ow to make 'im try. We'd almost turned the job up, until at last one day We got the last yard out of 'im in a most amazin' way.

It was all along o' master ; which master 'as the name
Of a reg'lar true blue sportsman, an' always acts the
same ;

But we all 'as weaker moments, which master 'e 'ad one,
An' 'e went and bought a motor-car when motor-cars
begun.

I seed it in the stable yard—it fairly turned me sick—
A greasy, wheezy engine as can neither buck nor kick.
You've a screw to drive it forrard, and a screw to make
it stop,
For it was foaled in a smithy stove an' bred in a black-
smith shop.

It didn't want no stable, it didn't ask no groom,
It didn't need no nothin' but a bit o' standin' room.
Just fill it up with paraffin an' it would go all day,
Which the same should be agin the law if I could 'ave
my way.

Well, master took 'is motor-car, an' moted 'ere an' there,
A frightenin' the 'orses an' a poisonin' the air.
'E wore a bloomin' yachtin' cap, but Lor' ! wot *did* 'e
know,
Excep' that if you turn a screw the thing would stop
or go ?

An' then one day it wouldn't go. 'E screwed and
screwed again,
But somethin' jammed, an' there 'e stuck in the mud of
a country lane.

It 'urt 'is pride most cruel, but what was 'e to do ?
So at last 'e bade me fetch a 'orse to pull the motor
through.

This was the 'orse we fetched 'im ; an' when we reached
the car,
We braced 'im tight and proper to the middle of the bar,
And buckled up 'is traces and lashed them to each side,
While 'e 'eld 'is 'ead so 'aughtily, an' looked most
dignified.

Not bad tempered, mind you, but kind of pained and
vexed,
And 'e seemed to say, " Well, bli' me ! wot *will* they ask
me next ?
I've put up with some liberties, but this caps all by far,
To be assistant engine to a crocky motor-car ! "

Well, master 'e was in the car, a-fiddlin' with the gear,
And the 'orse was mediatin', an' I was standin' near,
When master 'e touched somethin'—what it was we'll
never know—
But it sort o' spurred the boiler up and made the engine
go.

" 'Old 'ard, old gal ! " says master, and " Gently then,"
says I,
But an engine won't 'eed coaxin' an' it ain't no use to
try ;
So first 'e pulled a lever, an' then 'e turned a screw,
But the thing kept crawlin' forrard spite of all that 'e
could do.

And first it went quite slowly and the 'orse went also
slow,
But 'e 'ad to buck up faster when the wheels began to go ;
For the car kept crowdin' on 'im and buttin' 'im along,
And in less than 'alf a minute, sir, that 'orse was goin'
strong.

At first 'e walked quite dignified, an' then 'e 'ad to trot,
And then 'e tried a canter when the pace became too 'ot.
'E looked 'is very 'aughtiest, as if 'e didn't mind,
And all the time the motor-car was pushin' 'im be'ind.

Now, master lost 'is 'ead when 'e found 'e couldn't stop,
And 'e pulled a valve or somethin' an' somethin' else
went pop,
An' somethin' else went fizzywiz, and in a flash, or less,
That blessed car was goin' like a limited express.

Master 'eld the steerin' gear, an' kept the road all right,
And away they whizzed and clattered—my aunt ! it
was a sight.
'E seemed the finest draught 'orse as ever lived by far,
For all the country Juggins thought 'twas 'im wot pulled
the car.

'E was stretchin' like a grey'ound, 'e was goin' all 'e
knew,
But it bumped an' shoved be'ind 'im, for all that 'e
could do ;
It butted 'im an' boosted 'im an' spanked 'im on a'ead,
Till 'e broke the ten-mile record, same as I already said.

Ten mile in twenty minutes ! 'E done it, sir. That's true—

The only time we ever found what that 'ere 'orse could do—

Some say it wasn't 'ardly fair, and the papers made a fuss,
But 'e broke the ten-mile record, and that's good enough
for us.

You see that 'orse's tail, sir ? You don't ! No more
do we,

Which really ain't surprisin', for 'e 'as no tail to see ;
That engine wore it off 'im before master made it stop,
And all the road was littered like a bloomin' barber's
shop.

And master ? Well, it cured 'im. 'E altered from that
day,

And come back to 'is 'orses in the good old-fashioned
way.

And if you wants to git the sack, the quickest way by far
Is to 'int as 'ow you think 'e ought to keep a motor-car.

With the Chiddingfolds

THE horse is bedded down
Where the straw lies deep.
The hound is in the kennel ;
Let the poor hound sleep !
And the fox is in the spinney
By the run which he is haunting,
And I'll lay an even guinea
That a goose or two is wanting
When the farmer comes to count them in the morning.

The horse is up and saddled ;
Girth the old horse tight !
The hounds are out and drawing
In the morning light.
Now it's " Yoick ! " among the heather,
And it's " Yoick ! " across the clover,
And it's " To him, all together ! "
" Hyke a Bertha ! Hyke a Rover ! "
And the woodlands smell so sweetly in the morning.

There's Termagant a-whimpering ;
She whimpers so.
There's a young hound yapping !
Let the young hound go !

But the old hound is cunning,
And it's him we mean to follow,
"They are running! They are running!"
And it's "Forrard to the hollo!"
For the scent is lying strongly in the morning.

"Who's the fool that heads him?
Hold hard, and let him pass!"
He's out among the osiers
He's clear upon the grass.
You grip his flanks and settle,
For the horse is stretched and straining,
Here's a game to test your mettle,
And a sport to try your training,
When the Chiddingfolds are running in the morning.

We're up by the Coppice
And we're down by the Mill,
We're out upon the Common,
And the hounds are running still.
You must tighten on the leather,
For we blunder through the bracken;
Though you're over hocks in heather
Still the pace must never slacken
As we race through Thursley Common in the morning.

We are breaking from the tangle
We are out upon the green,
There's a bank and a hurdle
With a quickset between.

You must steady him and try it,
You are over with a scramble.
Here's a wattle ! You must fly it,
And you land among the bramble,
For it's roughish, toughish going in the morning.

'Ware the bog by the Grove !
As you pound through the slush.
See the whip ! See the huntsman !
We are close upon his brush.
'Ware the root that lies before you !
It will trip you if you blunder.
'Ware the branch that's drooping o'er you !
You must dip and swerve from under
As you gallop through the woodland in the morning.

There were fifty at the find,
There were forty at the mill,
There were twenty on the heath,
And ten are going still.
Some are pounded, some are shirking,
And they dwindle and diminish
Till a weary pair are working,
Spent and blowing, to the finish,
And we hear the shrill whoo-ooing in the morning.

The horse is bedded down
Where the straw lies deep,
The hound is in the kennel,
He is yapping in his sleep.

But the fox is in the spinney
Lying snug in earth and burrow.
And I'll lay an even guinea
We could find again to-morrow,
If we chose to go a-hunting in the morning.

A Hunting Morning

PUT the saddle on the mare,
For the wet winds blow ;
There's winter in the air,
And autumn all below.
For the red leaves are flying
And the red bracken dying,
And the red fox lying
Where the osiers grow.

Put the bridle on the mare,
For my blood runs chill ;
And my heart, it is there,
On the heather-tufted hill,
With the grey skies o'er us,
And the long-drawn chorus
Of a running pack before us
From the find to the kill.

Then lead round the mare,
For it's time that we began,
And away with thought and care,
Save to live and be a man,

While the keen air is blowing,
And the huntsman holloing,
And the black mare going
As the black mare can.

The Old Grey Fox

WE started from the Valley Pride,
And Farnham way we went.

We waited at the cover-side,
But never found a scent.

Then we tried the withy beds
Which grow by Frensham town,
And there we found the old grey fox,
The same old fox,
The game old fox ;

Yes, there we found the old grey fox,
Which lives on Hankley Down.

So here's to the master,
And here's to the man !
And here's to twenty couple
Of the white and black and tan !
Here's a find without a wait !
Here's a hedge without a gate !
Here's the man who follows straight,
Where the old fox ran.

The Member rode his thoroughbred,
Doctor had the grey,
The Soldier led on a roan red,
The Sailor rode the bay.

Squire was there on his Irish mare,
And Parson on the brown ;
And so we chased the old grey fox,
The same old fox ;
The game old fox,
And so we chased the old grey fox
Across the Hankley Down.

So here's to the master,
And here's to the man !
etc. etc. etc.

The Doctor's grey was going strong
Until she slipped and fell ;
He had to keep his bed so long
His patients all got well.
The Member he had lost his seat,
'Twas carried by his horse ;
And so we chased the old grey fox,
The same old fox,
The game old fox ;
And so we chased the old grey fox
That earthed in Hankley Gorse.

So here's to the master,
And here's to the man !
etc. etc. etc.

The Parson sadly fell away,
And in the furze did lie ;
The words we heard that Parson say
Made all the horses shy !

The Sailor he was seen no more
Upon that stormy bay ;
But still we chased the old grey fox,
The same old fox,
The game old fox ;
Still we chased the old grey fox
Through all the winter day.

So here's to the master,
And here's to the man !
etc. etc. etc.

And when we found him gone to ground,
They sent for spade and man ;
But Squire said " Shame ! The beast was game
A gamer never ran ! "
His wind and pace have gained the race,
His life is fairly won.
But may we meet the old grey fox,
The same old fox,
The game old fox ;
May we meet the old grey fox
Before the year is done.

So here's to the master,
And here's to the man !
And here's to twenty couple
Of the white and black and tan !
Here's a find without a wait !
Here's a hedge without a gate !
Here's the man who follows straight,
Where the old fox ran.

'Ware Holes !

[" 'Ware Holes ! " is the expression used in the hunting-field to warn those behind against rabbit-burrows or other such dangers.]

A SPORTIN' death ! My word it was !
An' taken in a sportin' way.
Mind you, I wasn't there to see ;
I only tell you what they say.

They found that day at Shillinglee,
An' ran 'im down to Chillinghurst ;
The fox was goin' straight an' free
For ninety minutes at a burst.

They 'ad a check at Ebernoe
An' made a cast across the Down,
Until they got a view 'ullo
An' chased 'im up to Kirdford town.

From Kirdford 'e run Bramber way,
An' took 'em over 'alf the Weald.
If you 'ave tried the Sussex clay,
You'll guess it weeded out the field.

Until at last I don't suppose
As 'arf a dozen, at the most,
Came safe to where the grassland goes
Switchbackin' southwards to the coast.

Young Captain 'Eadley, 'e was there,
And Jim the whip an' Percy Day ;
The Purcells an' Sir Charles Adair,
An' this 'ere gent from London way.

For 'e 'ad gone amazin' fine,
Two 'undred pounds between 'is knees ;
Eight stone he was, an' rode at nine,
As light an' limber as you please.

'E was a stranger to the 'Unt,
There weren't a person as 'e knew there ;
But 'e could ride, that London gent—
'E sat 'is mare as if 'e grew there.

They seed the 'ounds upon the scent,
But found a fence across their track,
And 'ad to fly it ; else it meant
A turnin' and a 'arkin' back.

'E was the foremost at the fence,
And as 'is mare just cleared the rail
He turned to them that rode be'ind,
For three was at 'is very tail.

"'Ware 'oles !" says 'e, an' with the word,
Still sittin' easy on his mare,
Down, down 'e went, an' down an' down,
Into the quarry yawnin' there.

Some say it was two 'undred foot ;
The bottom lay as black as ink.
I guess they 'ad some ugly dreams,
Who reined their 'orses on the brink.

'E'd only time for that one cry ;
"'Ware 'oles !" says 'e, an' saves all three.
There may be better deaths to die,
But that one's good enough for me.

For mind you, 'twas a sportin' end,
Upon a right good sportin' day ;
They think a deal of 'im down 'ere,
That gent what came from London way.

The Home-Coming of the "Eurydice"

[Lost, with her crew of three hundred boys, on the last day of her voyage, March 23, 1876. She foundered off Portsmouth, from which town many of the boys came.]

UP with the royals that top the white spread of her !
Press her and dress her, and drive through the
foam ;

The Island's to port, and the mainland ahead of her ;
Hey for the Warner and Hayling and Home !

"Bo'sun, O Bo'sun, just look at the green of it !
Look at the red cattle down by the hedge !
Look at the farmsteading—all that is seen of it,
One little gable end over the edge !"

"Lord ! the tongues of them clattering, clattering,
All growing wild at a peep of the Wight ;
Aye, sir, aye, it has set them all chattering,
Thinking of home and their mothers to-night."

Spread the topgallants—oh, lay them out lustily !
What though it darken o'er Netherby Combe ?
'Tis but the valley wind, puffing so gustily—
On for the Warner and Hayling and Home !

"Bo'sun, O Bo'sun, just see the long slope of it !
Culver is there, with the cliff and the light.
Tell us, oh tell us, now is there a hope of it ?
Shall we have leave for our homes for to-night ? "

"Tut, the clack of them ! Steadily ! Steadily !
Aye, as you say, sir, they're little ones still ;
One long reach should open it readily,
Round by St. Helens and under the hill.

"The Spit and the Nab are the gates of the promise,
Their mothers to them—and to us it's our wives.
I've sailed forty years, and——By God it's upon us !
Down royals, down top'sles—down, down, for your
lives ! "

A grey swirl of snow with the squall at the back of it,
Heeling her, reeling her, beating her down !
A gleam of her bends in the thick of the wrack of it,
A flutter of white in the eddies of brown.

It broke in one moment of blizzard and blindness ;
The next, like a foul bat, it flapped on its way.
But our ship and our boys ! Gracious Lord, in your
kindness,
Give help to the mothers who need it to-day !

Give help to the women who wait by the water,
Who stand on the Hard with their eyes past the Wight.
Ah ! whisper it gently, you sister or daughter,
"Our boys are all gathered at home for to-night."

The Inner Room

I T is mine—the little chamber,
Mine alone.
I had it from my forbears
Years ago.
Yet within its walls I see
A most motley company,
And they one and all claim me
As their own.

There's one who is a soldier
Bluff and keen ;
Single-minded, heavy-fisted,
Rude of mien.
He would gain a purse or stake it,
He would win a heart or break it,
He would give a life or take it,
Conscience-clean.

And near him is a priest
Still schism-whole ;
He loves the censer-reek
And organ-roll.

He has leanings to the mystic,
Sacramental, eucharistic ;
And dim yearnings altruistic
 Thrill his soul.

There's another who with doubts
 Is overcast ;
I think him younger brother
 To the last.
Walking wary stride by stride,
Peering forwards anxious-eyed,
Since he learned to doubt his guide
 In the past.

And 'mid them all, alert,
 But somewhat cowed,
There sits a stark-faced fellow,
 Beetle-browed,
Whose black soul shrinks away
From a lawyer-ridden day,
And has thoughts he dare not say
 Half avowed.

There are others who are sitting,
 Grim as doom,
In the dim ill-boding shadow
 Of my room.
Darkling figures, stern or quaint,
Now a savage, now a saint,
Showing fitfully and faint
 Through the gloom.

And those shadows are so dense,
There may be
Many—very many—more
Than I see.

They are sitting day and night
Soldier, rogue, and anchorite ;
And they wrangle and they fight
Over me.

If the stark-faced fellow win,
All is o'er !
If the priest should gain his will,
I doubt no more !
But if each shall have his day,
I shall swing and I shall sway
In the same old weary way
As before.

The Irish Colonel

S AID the king to the colonel,
“The complaints are eternal,
That you Irish give more trouble
Than any other corps.”

Said the colonel to the king,
“This complaint is no new thing,
For your foemen, sire, have made it
A hundred times before.”

The Blind Archer

LITTLE boy Love drew his bow at a chance,
Shooting down at the ballroom floor ;
He hit an old chaperone watching the dance,
And oh ! but he wounded her sore.

“ Hey, Love, you couldn’t mean that !

Hi, Love, what would you be at ? ”

No word would he say,

But he flew on his way,

For the little boy’s busy, and how could he stay ?

Little boy Love drew a shaft just for sport
At the soberest club in Pall Mall ;
He winged an old veteran drinking his port,
And down that old veteran fell.

“ Hey, Love, you mustn’t do that !

Hi, Love, what would you be at ?

This cannot be right !

It’s ludicrous quite ! ”

But it’s no use to argue, for Love’s out of sight.

A sad-faced young clerk in a cell all apart
Was planning a celibate vow ;
But the boy’s random arrow has sunk in his heart,
And the cell is an empty one now.

“ Hey, Love, you mustn’t do that !
Hi, Love, what would you be at ?
 He is not for you,
 He has duties to do.”
“ But I *am* his duty,” quoth Love as he flew.

The king sought a bride, and the nation had hoped
 For a queen without rival or peer.
But the little boy shot, and the king has eloped
 With Miss No-one on Nothing a year.
 “ Hey, Love, you couldn’t mean that !
 Hi, Love, what would you be at ?
 What an impudent thing
 To make game of a king ! ”
“ But *I’m* a king also,” cried Love on the wing.

Little boy Love grew pettish one day ;
 “ If you keep on complaining,” he swore,
“ I’ll pack both my bow and my quiver away,
 And so I shall plague you no more.”
 “ Hey, Love, you mustn’t do that !
 Hi, Love what would you be at ?
 You may ruin our ease,
 You may do what you please,
But we can’t do without you, you dear little tease ! ”

A Parable

THE cheese-mites asked how the cheese got there,
And warmly debated the matter ;
The Orthodox said that it came from the air,
And the Heretics said from the platter.
They argued it long and they argued it strong,
And I hear they are arguing now ;
But of all the choice spirits who lived in the cheese,
Not one of them thought of a cow.

A Tragedy

WHO'S that walking on the moorland ?
Who's that moving on the hill ?
They are passing 'mid the bracken,
But the shadows grow and blacken
And I cannot see them clearly on the hill.

Who's that calling on the moorland ?
Who's that crying on the hill ?
Was it bird or was it human,
Was it child, or man, or woman,
Who was calling so sadly on the hill ?

Who's that running on the moorland ?
Who's that flying on the hill ?
He is there—and there again,
But you cannot see him plain,
For the shadow lies so darkly on the hill.

What's that lying in the heather ?
What's that lurking on the hill ?
My horse will go no nearer,
And I cannot see it clearer,
But there's something that is lying on the hill.

The Passing

IT was the hour of dawn,
When the heart beats thin and small,
The window glimmered grey,
Framed in a shadow wall.

And in the cold sad light
Of the early morningtide,
The dear dead girl came back
And stood by his bedside.

The girl he lost came back ;
He saw her flowing hair ;
It flickered and it waved
Like a breath in frosty air.

As in a steamy glass,
Her face was dim and blurred ;
Her voice was sweet and thin,
Like the calling of a bird.

“ You said that you would come,
You promised not to stay ;
And I have waited here,
To help you on the way.

“ I have waited on,
But still you bide below ;
You said that you would come,
And oh, I want you so !

“ For half my soul is here,
And half my soul is there,
When you are on the earth
And I am in the air.

“ But on your dressing-stand
There lies a triple key ;
Unlock the little gate
Which fences you from me.

“ Just one little pang,
Just one throb of pain,
And then your weary head
Between my breasts again.”

In the dim unhomely light
Of the early morningtide,
He took the triple key
And he laid it by his side.

A pistol, silver chased,
An open hunting knife,
A phial of the drug
Which cures the ill of life.

He looked upon the three,
And sharply drew his breath :
“ Now help me, oh my love,
For I fear this cold grey death.”

She bent her face above,
She kissed him and she smiled ;
She soothed him as a mother
May soothe a frightened child.

“ Just that little pang, love,
Just a throb of pain,
And then your weary head
Between my breasts again.”

He snatched the pistol up,
He pressed it to his ear ;
But a sudden sound broke in,
And his skin was raw with fear.

He took the hunting knife,
He tried to raise the blade ;
It glimmered cold and white,
And he was sore afraid.

He poured the potion out,
But it was thick and brown ;
His throat was sealed against it,
And he could not drain it down.

He looked to her for help,
And when he looked—behold !
His love was there before him
As in the days of old.

He saw the drooping head,
He saw the gentle eyes ;
He saw the same shy grace of hers
He had been wont to prize.

She pointed and she smiled,
And lo ! he was aware
Of a half-lit bedroom chamber
And a silent figure there.

A silent figure lying
A-sprawl upon a bed,
With a silver-mounted pistol
Still clotted to his head.

And as he downward gazed,
Her voice came full and clear,
The homely tender voice
Which he had loved to hear :

“The key is very certain,
The door is sealed to none.
You did it, oh, my darling !
And you never knew it done.

“ When the net was broken,
 You thought you felt its mesh ;
You carried to the spirit
 The troubles of the flesh.

“ And are you trembling still, dear ?
 Then let me take your hand ;
And I will lead you outward
 To a sweet and restful land.

“ You know how once in London
 I put my griefs on you ;
But I can carry yours now—
 Most sweet it is to do !

“ Most sweet it is to do, love,
 And very sweet to plan
How I, the helpless woman,
 Can help the helpful man.

“ But let me see you smiling
 With the smile I know so well ;
Forget the world of shadows,
 And the empty broken shell.

“ It is the worn-out garment
 In which you tore a rent ;
You tossed it down, and carelessly
 Upon your way you went.

“ It is not *you*, my sweetheart,
For you are here with me.
That frame was but the promise of
The thing that was to be—

“ A tuning of the choir
Ere the harmonies begin ;
And yet it is the image
Of the subtle thing within.

“ There’s not a trick of body,
There’s not a trait of mind,
But you bring it over with you,
Ethereal, refined,

“ But still the same ; for surely
If we alter as we die,
You would be you no longer,
And I would not be I.

“ I might be an angel,
But not the girl you knew ;
You might be immaculate,
But that would not be you.

“ And now I see you smiling,
So, darling, take my hand ;
And I will lead you outward
To a sweet and pleasant land,

“ Where thought is clear and nimble,
Where life is pure and fresh,
Where the soul comes back rejoicing
From the mud-bath of the flesh.

“ But still that soul is human,
With human ways, and so
I love my love in spirit,
As I loved him long ago.”

So with hands together
And fingers twining tight,
The two dead lovers drifted
In the golden morning light.

But a grey-haired man was lying
Beneath them on a bed,
With a silver-mounted pistol
Still clotted to his head.

The Franklin's Maid

(From "The White Company")

THE franklin he hath gone to roam,
The franklin's maid she bides at home ;
But she is cold, and coy, and staid,
And who may win the franklin's maid ?

There came a knight of high renown
In bassinet and ciclatoun ;
On bended knee full long he prayed—
He might not win the franklin's maid.

There came a squire so debonair,
His dress was rich, his words were fair ;
He sweetly sang, he deftly played—
He could not win the franklin's maid.

There came a mercer wonder-fine,
With velvet cap and gaberdine ;
For all his ships, for all his trade,
He could not buy the franklin's maid.

There came an archer bold and true,
With bracer guard and stave of yew ;
His purse was light, his jerkin frayed—
Haro, alas ! the franklin's maid !

Oh, some have laughed and some have cried,
And some have scoured the countryside ;
But off they ride through wood and glade,
The bowman and the franklin's maid.

The Old Huntsman

THERE'S a keen and grim old huntsman
On a horse as white as snow ;
Sometimes he is very swift
And sometimes he is slow.
But he never is at fault,
For he always hunts at view
And he rides without a halt
After you.

The huntsman's name is Death,
His horse's name is Time ;
He is coming, he is coming
As I sit and write this rhyme ;
He is coming, he is coming,
As you read the rhyme I write ;
You can hear the hoofs' low drumming
Day and night.

You can hear the distant drumming
As the clock goes tick-a-tack,
And the chiming of the hours
Is the music of his pack.

You may hardly note their growling
Underneath the noonday sun,
But at night you hear them howling
As they run.

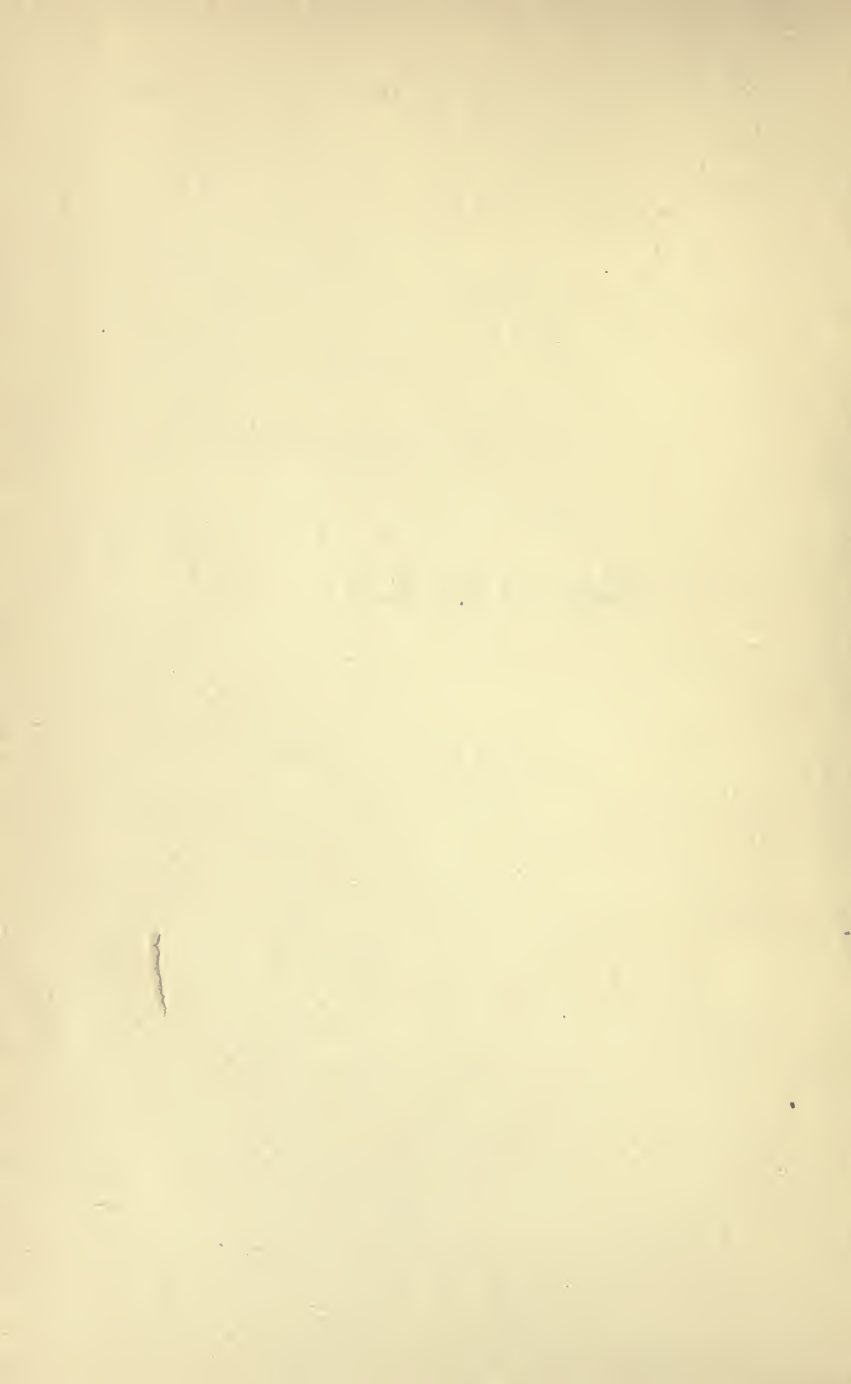
And they never check or falter
For they never miss their kill ;
Seasons change and systems alter,
But the hunt is running still.
Hark ! the evening chime is playing,
O'er the long grey town it peals ;
Don't you hear the death-hound baying
At your heels ?

Where is there an earth or burrow ?
Where a cover left for you ?
A year, a week, perhaps to-morrow
Brings the Huntsman's death halloo !
Day by day he gains upon us,
And the most that we can claim
Is that when the hounds are on us
We die game.

And somewhere dwells the Master,
By whom it was decreed ;
He sent the savage huntsman,
He bred the snow-white steed.
These hounds which run for ever,
He set them on your track ;
He hears you scream, but never
Calls them back.

He does not heed our suing,
 We never see his face ;
He hunts to our undoing,
 We thank him for the chase.
We thank him and we flatter,
 We hope—because we must—
But have we cause ? No matter !
 Let us trust !

Songs of the Road



A Hymn of Empire

(Coronation Year, 1911)

GOD save England, blessed by Fate,
So old, yet ever young :
The acorn isle from which the great
Imperial oak has sprung !
And God guard Scotland's kindly soil,
The land of stream and glen,
The granite mother that has bred
A breed of granite men !

God save Wales, from Snowdon's vales
To Severn's silver strand !
For all the grace of that old race
Still haunts the Celtic land.
And, dear old Ireland, God save you,
And heal the wounds of old,
For every grief you ever knew
May joy come fifty-fold !

Set Thy guard over us,
May Thy shield cover us,
Enfold and uphold us
On land and on sea !

From the palm to the pine,
From the snow to the line,
Brothers together
And children of Thee.

Thy blessing, Lord, on Canada,
Young giant of the West,
Still upward lay her broadening way,
And may her feet be blessed !
And Africa, whose hero breeds
Are blending into one,
Grant that she tread the path which leads
To holy unison.

May God protect Australia
Set in her Southern Sea !
Though far thou art, it cannot part
Thy brother folks from thee.
And you, the Land of Maori,
The island-sisters fair,
Ocean hemmed and lake be-gemmed,
God hold you in His care !

Set Thy guard over us,
May Thy shield cover us,
Enfold and uphold us
On land and on sea !
From the palm to the pine,
From the snow to the line,
Brothers together
And children of Thee.

God guard our Indian brothers,
The Children of the Sun,
Guide us and walk beside us
Until Thy will be done.
To all be equal measure
Whate'er his blood or birth,
Till we shall build as Thou hast willed
O'er all Thy fruitful Earth.

May we maintain the story
Of honest, fearless right !
Not ours, not ours the Glory !
What are we in Thy sight ?
Thy servants, and no other,
Thy servants may we be,
To help our weaker brother
As we crave for help from Thee !

Set Thy guard over us,
May Thy shield cover us,
Enfold and uphold us
On land and on sea !
From the palm to the pine,
From the snow to the line,
Brothers together
And children of Thee.

Sir Nigel's Song

A SWORD ! A sword ! Ah, give me a sword !
For the world is all to win.
Though the way be hard and the door be barred
The strong man enters in.
If Chance or Fate still hold the gate
Give me the iron key,
And turret high, my plume shall fly
Or you may weep for me !

A horse ! A horse ! Ah, give me a horse
To bear me out afar,
Where blackest need and grimmest deed,
And sweetest perils are.
Hold thou my ways from glutted days,
Where poisoned leisure lies,
And point the path of tears and wrath
Which mounts to high emprise.

A heart ! A heart ! Ah, give me a heart,
To rise to circumstance !
Serene and high, and bold to try
The hazard of a chance.
With strength to wait, but fixed as fate
To plan and dare and do ;
The peer of all—and only thrall,
Sweet lady mine, to you !

The Arab Steed

I GAVE the 'orse 'is evenin' feed,
And bedded of 'im down,
And went to 'ear the sing-song
In the bar-room of the Crown,
And one young feller spoke a piece
As told a kind of tale
About an Arab man wot 'ad
A certain 'orse for sale.

I 'ave no grudge against the man—
I never 'eard 'is name,
But if he was my closest pal
I'd say the very same,
For wot you do in other things
Is neither 'ere nor there,
But w'en it comes to 'orses
You must keep upon the square.

Now I'm tellin' you the story
Just as it was told last night,
And if I wrong this Arab man
Then 'e can set me right ;
But s'posin' all these fac's *are* fac's,
Then I make bold to say
That I think it was not sportsmanlike
To act in sich a way.

For, as I understand the thing,
 'E went to sell this steed—
Which is a name they give a 'orse
 Of some outlandish breed—
And soon 'e found a customer,
 A proper sportin' gent
Who planked 'is money down at once
 Without no argument.

Now when the deal was finished
 And the money paid, you'd think
This Arab would 'ave asked the gent
 At once to name 'is drink,
Or at least 'ave thanked 'im kindly,
 An' wished 'im a good day,
And own as 'e'd been treated
 In a very 'andsome way.

But instead o' this 'e started
 A-talkin' to the steed,
And speakin' of its "braided mane"
 An' of its "wingèd speed,"
And other sich expressions
 With which I can't agree,
For a 'orse with wings an' braids an' things
 Is not the 'orse for me.

The moment that 'e 'ad the cash—
 Or wot 'e called the gold,
'E turned as nasty as could be.
 Says 'e, "You're sold! You're sold!"

Them was 'is words ; it's not for me
To settle wot 'e meant ;
It may 'ave been the 'orse was sold,
It may 'ave been the gent.

I've not a word to say agin
His fondness for 'is 'orse,
But why should 'e insinivate
The gent would treat 'im worse ?
An' why should 'e go talkin'
In that aggravatin' way,
As if the gent would gallop 'im
And wallop 'im all day ?

It may 'ave been an 'arness 'orse,
It may 'ave been an 'ack,
But a bargain is a bargain
An' there ain't no goin' back ;
For when you've picked the money up,
That finishes the deal,
And after that your mouth is shut,
Wotever you may feel.

Supposin' this 'ere Arab man
'Ad wanted to be free,
'E could 'ave done it businesslike,
The same as you or me ;
A fiver might 'ave squared the gent,
An' then 'e could 'ave claimed
As 'e'd cleared 'imself quite 'andsome,
And no call to be ashamed.

But instead o' that this Arab man
Went on from bad to worse,
An' took an' chucked the money
At the cove wot bought the 'orse ;
'E'd 'ave learned 'im better manners
If 'e'd waited there a bit,
But 'e scooted on 'is bloomin' steed
As 'ard as 'e could split.

Per'aps 'e sold 'im after
Or per'aps 'e 'ires 'im out,
But I'd like to warn that Arab man
W'en next 'e comes about ;
For wot 'e does in other things
Is neither 'ere nor there,
But w'en it comes to 'orses
We must keep 'im on the square.

A Post-Impressionist

PETER WILSON, A.R.A.,
In his small atelier
Studied Continental Schools,
Drew by Academic rules.
So he made his bid for fame
But no golden answer came,
For the fashion of his day
Chanced to set the other way,
And decadent forms of Art
Drew the patrons of the mart.

Now this poor reward of merit
Rankled so in Peter's spirit,
It was more than he could bear ;
So one night in mad despair
He took his canvas for the year,
(" Isle of Wight from Southsea Pier ")
And he hurled it from his sight,
Hurled it blindly to the night,
Saw it fall diminuendo
From the open lattice window,
Till it landed with a flop
On the dust-bin's ashen top,
Where, 'mid damp and rain and grime,
It remained till morning time.

Then when morning brought reflection
He was shamed at his dejection,
And he thought with consternation
Of his poor ill-used creation ;
Down he rushed, and found it there
Lying all exposed and bare,
Mud-bespattered, spoiled and botched,
Water sodden, fungus-blotched,
All the outlines blurred and wavy,
All the colours turned to gravy,
Fluids of a dappled hue,
Blues on red and reds on blue,
A pea-green mother with her daughter,
Crazy boats on crazy water
Steering out to who knows what,
An island or a lobster-pot ?

Oh, the wretched man's despair !
Was it lost beyond repair ?
Swift he bore it from below,
Hastened to the studio,
Where with anxious eyes he studied
If the ruin, blotched and muddled,
Could by any human skill
Be made a normal picture still.
Thus in most repentant mood
Unhappy Peter Wilson stood,
When, with pompous face, self-centred,
Willoughby the critic entered—
He of whom it has been said
He lives a century ahead—

[illegible]

"Ah, Wilson," said the famous man,
 Turning himself the walls to scan,
 "The same old style of thing I trace,
 Workmanlike but commonplace.
 Believe me, sir, the work that lives
 Must furnish more than Nature gives.
 "The light that never was," you know,
 That is your mark—but here, hullo !
 What's this ? What's this ? Magnificent !
 I've wronged you, Wilson ! I repent !
 A masterpiece ! A perfect thing !
 What atmosphere ! What colouring !
 Spanish Armada, is it not ?
 A view of Ryde, no matter what,
 I pledge my critical renown
 That this will be the talk of Town.
 Where did you get those daring hues,
 Those blues on reds, those reds on blues ?
 That pea-green face, that gamboge sky ?
 You've far outcried the latest cry—
 Out Monet-ed Monet. I have said
 Our Art was sleeping, but not dead.
 Long have we waited for the Star,
 I watched the skies for it afar,
 The hour has come—and here you are."

And that is how our artist friend
Found his struggles at an end,
And from his little Chelsea flat
Became the Park Lane plutocrat.
'Neath his sheltered garden wall
When the rain begins to fall,
And the stormy winds do blow,
You may see them in a row,
Red effects and lake and yellow
Getting nicely blurred and mellow,
With the subtle gauzy mist
Of the great Impressionist.
Ask him how he chanced to find
How to leave the French behind,
And he answers quick and smart,
"English climate's best for Art."

Empire Builders

CAPTAIN TEMPLE, D.S.O.,
With his banjo and retriever.
“Rough, I know, on poor old Flo,
But, by Jove! I couldn’t leave her.”
Niger ribbon on his breast,
In his blood the Niger fever,
Captain Temple, D.S.O.,
With his banjo and retriever.

Cox of the Politicals,
With his cigarette and glasses,
Skilled in Pushtoo gutturals,
Odd job man among the Passes,
Keeper of the Zakka Khels,
Tutor of the Khaiber Ghazis,
Cox of the Politicals,
With his cigarette and glasses.

Mr. Hawkins, Junior Sub.,
Late of Woolwich and Thames Ditton,
Thinks his battery the hub
Of the whole wide orb of Britain.
Half a hero, half a cub,
Lithe and playful as a kitten,
Mr. Hawkins, Junior Sub.,
Late of Woolwich and Thames Ditton.

Eighty Tommies, big and small,
Grumbling hard as is their habit.
“ Say, mate, what’s a Bunerwal ? ”
“ Somethin’ like a bloomin’ rabbit.”
“ Got to hoof it to Chitral ! ”
“ Blarst ye, did ye think to cab it ! ”
Eighty Tommies, big and small,
Grumbling hard as is their habit.

Swarthy Goorkhas, short and stout,
Merry children, laughing, crowing,
Don’t know what it’s all about,
Don’t know any use in knowing ;
Only know they mean to go
Where the Sirkar thinks of going.
Little Goorkhas, brown and stout,
Merry children, laughing, crowing.

Punjaub Rifles, fit and trim,
Curly whiskered sons of battle,
Very dignified and prim
Till they hear the Jezails rattle ;
Cattle thieves of yesterday,
Now the wardens of the cattle,
Fighting Brahmins of Lahore,
Curly whiskered sons of battle.

Up the winding mountain path
See the long-drawn column go ;
Himalayan aftermath
Lying rosy on the snow.

Motley ministers of wrath
Building better than they know,
In the rosy aftermath
Trailing upward to the snow.

The Groom's Encore

NOT tired of 'earin' stories! You're a nailer, so
you are!

I thought I should 'ave choked you off with that 'ere
motor-car.

Well, mister, 'ere's another; and, mind you, it's a
fact

Though you'll think perhaps I copped it out o' some blue
ribbon tract.

It was in the days when farmer men were jolly-faced
and stout,

For all the cash was comin' in, and little goin' out,

But now, you see, the farmer men are 'ungry-faced and
thin,

For all the cash is goin' out and little comin' in.

But in the days I'm speakin' of, before the drop in wheat,
The life them farmers led was such as couldn't well be
beat;

They went the pace amazin', they 'unted and they
shot,

And this 'ere Jeremiah Brown the liveliest of the lot.

'E was a fine young fellar ; the best roun' 'ere by
far,
But just a bit full-blooded, as fine young fellars are ;
Which I know they didn't ought to, an' it's very wrong
of course,
But the colt wot never capers makes a mighty useless
'orse.

The lad was never vicious, but 'e made the money go,
For 'e was ready with 'is "yes," and backward with 'is
"no,"
And so 'e turned to drink which is the avenoo to 'ell,
An' 'ow 'e came to stop 'imself is wot I 'ave to tell.

Four days on end 'e never knew 'ow 'e 'ad got to
bed,
Until one mornin' fifty clocks was tickin' in 'is 'ead,
And on the same the doctor came, "You're very near
D.T.,
If you don't stop yourself, young chap, you'll pay the
price," said 'e.

"It takes the form of visions, as I fear you'll quickly
know ;
Perhaps a string o' monkeys, all a-sittin' in a row,
Perhaps it's frogs or beetles, perhaps it's rats or
mice,
There are many sorts of visions and there's none of 'em
is nice."

But Brown 'e started laughin', "No doctor's muck,"
says 'e,
"A take-'em-break-'em gallop is the only cure for me!
They 'unt to-day down 'Orsham way. Bring round the
sorrel mare,
If them monkeys come inquiren' you can send 'em on
down there."

Well, Jeremiah rode to 'ounds, exactly as 'e said,
But all the time the doctor's words were ringin' in 'is 'ead,
"If you don't stop yourself, young chap, you've got
to pay the price,
There are many sorts of visions but none of 'em is nice."

They found that day at Leonards Lee and ran to Shipley
Wood,
'Ell-for-leather all the way, with scent and weather
good,
Never a check to 'Orton Beck and on across the Weald,
And all the way the Sussex clay was weedin' out the
field.

There's not a man among them could remember such
a run,
Straight as a rule to Bramber Pool and on by Annington,
They followed still past Breeding 'ill and on by Steyning
Town,
Until they'd cleared the 'edges and were out upon the
Down.

Full thirty mile from Plimmers Style, without a check or
 fault,
Full thirty mile the 'ounds 'ad run and never called
 a 'alt,
One by one the Field was done until at Findon Down,
There was no one with the 'untsman save young Jeremiah
 Brown.

And then the 'untsman 'e was beat. 'Is 'orse 'ad tripped
 and fell.
"By George," said Brown, "I'll go alone, and follow it
 to—well,
The place that it belongs to." And as 'e made the
 vow,
There broke from right in front of 'im the queerest kind
 of row.

There lay a copse of 'azels on the border of the track,
And into this two 'ounds 'ad run—them two was all
 the pack—
And now from these 'ere 'azels there came a fearsome
 'owl,
With a yappin' and a snappin' and a wicked snarlin'
 growl.

Jeremiah's blood ran cold—a frightened man was 'e,
But he butted through the bushes just to see what 'e
 could see,

And there beneath their shadow, blood drippin' from
his jaws,
Was an awful creature standin' with a 'ound beneath its
paws.

A fox ? Five foxes rolled in one—a pony's weight and
size,
A rampin', ragin' devil, all fangs and 'air and eyes ;
Too scared to speak, with shriek on shriek,
Brown galloped from the sight
With just one thought within 'is mind, "The doctor
told me right."

That evenin' late the minister was seated in his study,
When in there rushed a 'untin' man, all travel-stained
and muddy,
"Give me the Testament !" he cried. "And 'ear my
sacred vow,
That not one drop of drink shall ever pass my lips from
now."

'E swore it and 'e kept it and 'e keeps it to this day,
'E 'as turned from gin to ginger and says 'e finds it
pay,
You can search the whole o' Sussex from 'ere to Brighton
Town,
And you wouldn't find a better man than Jeremiah
Brown.

And the vision—it was just a wolf, a big Siberian,
A great fierce 'ungry devil from a showman's caravan,
But it saved 'im from perdition—and I don't mind if

I do,

I 'aven't seen no wolf myself—so 'ere's my best to you!

The Bay Horse

SQUIRE wants the bay horse,
For it is the best.
Squire holds the mortgage ;
Where's the interest ?
Haven't got the interest,
Can't raise a sou ;
Shan't sell the bay horse,
Whatever he may do.

Did you see the bay horse ?
Such a one to go !
He took a bit of ridin'
When I showed him at the Show.
First prize the broad jump,
First prize the high,
Gold medal, Class A,
You'll see it by-and-by.

I bred the bay horse
On the Withy Farm.
I broke the bay horse,
He broke my arm.
Don't blame the bay horse,
Blame the brittle bone,
I bred him and I've fed him,
And he's all my very own.

Just watch the bay horse
 Chock full of sense !
Ain't he just beautiful,
 Risin' to a fence !
Just hear the bay horse
 Whinin' in his stall,
Purrin' like a pussy cat
 When he hears me call.

But if Squire's lawyer
 Serves me with his writ,
I'll take the bay horse
 To Marley gravel pit.
Over the quarry edge,
 I'll sit him tight,
If he wants the brown hide,
 He's welcome to the white !

The Outcasts

THREE women stood by the river's flood
In the gas-lamp's murky light,
A devil watched them on the left,
And an angel on the right.

The clouds of lead flowed overhead ;
The leaden stream below ;
They marvelled much, that outcast three,
Why Fate should use them so.

Said one : " I have a mother dear,
Who lieth ill abed,
And by my sin the wage I win
From which she hath her bread."

Said one : " I am an outcast's child,
And such I came on earth.
If me ye blame, for this my shame,
Whom blame ye for my birth ? "

The third she sank a sin-blotted face
And prayed that she might rest,
In the weary flow of the stream below,
As on her mother's breast.

Now past there came a godly man,
Of goodly stock and blood,
And as he passed one frown he cast
At that sad sisterhood.

Sorely it grieved that godly man,
To see so foul a sight,
He turned his face, and strode apace,
And left them to the night.

But the angel drew her sisters three,
Within her pinions' span,
And the crouching devil slunk away
To join the godly man.

The End

“TELL me what to get and I will get it.”

“Then get that picture—that—the girl in white.”

“Now tell me where you wish that I should set it.”

“Lean it where I can see it—in the light.”

“If there is more, sir, you have but to say it.”

“Then bring those letters—those which lie apart.”

“Here is the packet! Tell me where to lay it.”

“Stoop over, nurse, and lay it on my heart.

“Thanks for your silence, nurse! You understand me!

And now I'll try to manage for myself.

But, as you go, I'll trouble you to hand me

The small blue bottle there upon the shelf.

“And so farewell! I feel that I am keeping

The sunlight from you; may your walk be bright!

When you return I may perchance be sleeping,

So, ere you go, one hand-clasp . . . and good night!”

1902-1909

THEY recruited William Evans
From the ploughtail and the spade ;
Ten years' service in the Devons
Left him smart as they are made.

Thirty or a trifle older,
Rather over six foot high,
Trim of waist and broad of shoulder,
Yellow-haired and blue of eye ;

Short of speech and very solid,
Fixed in purpose as a rock,
Slow, deliberate, and stolid,
Of the real West-country stock.

He had never been to college,
Got his teaching in the corps,
You can pick up useful knowledge
'Twixt Saltash and Singapore.

.

Old Field-Cornet Piet van Celling
Lived just northward of the Vaal,
And he called his white-washed dwelling,
Blesbock Farm, Rhenoster Kraal.

In his politics unbending,
Stern of speech and grim of face,
He pursued the never-ending
Quarrel with the English race.

Grizzled hair and face of copper,
Hard as nails from work and sport,
Just the model of a Dopper
Of the fierce old fighting sort.

With a shaggy bearded quota
On commando at his order,
He went off with Louis Botha
Trekking for the British border.

When Natal was first invaded
He was fighting night and day,
Then he scouted and he raided,
With De Wet and Delarey.

Till he had a brush with Plumer,
Got a bullet in his arm,
And returned in sullen humour
To the shelter of his farm.

Now it happened that the Devons,
Moving up in that direction,
Sent their Colour-Sergeant Evans
Foraging with half a section.

By a friendly Dutchman guided,
A Van Eloff or De Vilier,
They were promptly trapped and hided,
In a manner too familiar.

When the sudden scrap was ended,
And they sorted out the bag,
Sergeant Evans lay extended
Mauseritis in his leg.

So the Kaffirs bore him, cursing,
From the scene of his disaster,
And they left him to the nursing
Of the daughters of their master.

Now the second daughter, Sadie—
But the subject why pursue ?
Wounded youth and tender lady,
Ancient tale but ever new.

On the stoep they spent the gloaming,
Watched the shadows on the veldt,
Or she led her cripple roaming
To the eucalyptus belt.

He would lie and play with Jacko,
The baboon from Bushman's Kraal,
Smoked Magaliesberg tobacco
While she lisped to him in Taal.

Till he felt that he had rather
 He had died amid the slaughter,
If the harshness of the father
 Were not softened in the daughter.

So he asked an English question,
 And she answered him in Dutch,
But her smile was a suggestion,
 And he treated it as such.

Now among Rhenoster kopjes
 Somewhat northward of the Vaal,
You may see four little chappies,
 Three can walk and one can crawl.

And the blue of Transvaal heavens
 Is reflected in their eyes,
Each a little William Evans,
 Smaller model—pocket size.

Each a little Burgher Piet
 Of the hardy Boer race,
Two great peoples seem to meet
 In the tiny sunburned face.

And they often greatly wonder
 Why old granddad and Papa,
Should have been so far asunder,
 Till united by mamma.

And when asked, "Are you a Boer,
Or a little Englishman?"
Each will answer, short and sure,
"I am a South African."

But the father answers, chaffing,
"Africans but British too."
And the children echo, laughing,
"Half of mother—half of you."

It may seem a crude example,
In an isolated case,
But the story is a sample
Of the welding of the race.

So from bloodshed and from sorrow,
From the pains of yesterday,
Comes the nation of to-morrow
Broadly based and built to stay.

Loyal spirits strong in union,
Joined by kindred faith and blood,
Brothers in the wide communion
Of our sea-girt brotherhood.

*The Wanderer*¹

'T WAS in the shadowy gloaming
Of a cold and wet March day,
That a wanderer came roaming
From countries far away.

Scant raiment had he round him,
Nor purse, nor worldly gear,
Hungry and faint we found him,
And bade him welcome here.

His weary frame bent double,
His eyes were old and dim,
His face was writhed with trouble
Which none might share with him.

His speech was strange and broken,
And none could understand,
Such words as might be spoken
In some far distant land.

We guessed not whence he hailed from,
Nor knew what far-off quay
His roving bark had sailed from
Before he came to me.

¹ With acknowledgment to my friend Sir A. Quiller-Couch.

But there he was, so slender,
So helpless and so pale,
That my wife's heart grew tender
For one who seemed so frail.

She cried, " But you must bide here !
You shall no further roam.
Grow stronger by our side here,
Within our moorland home ! "

She laid her best before him,
Homely and simple fare,
And to his couch she bore him
The raiment he should wear.

To mine he had been welcome,
My suit of russet brown,
But she had dressed our weary guest
In a loose and easy gown.

And long in peace he lay there,
Brooding and still and weak,
Smiling from day to day there
At thoughts he would not speak.

The months flowed on, but ever
Our guest would still remain,
Nor made the least endeavour
To leave our home again.

He heeded not for grammar,
Nor did we care to teach,
But soon he learned to stammer
Some words of English speech.

With these our guest would tell us
The things that he liked best,
And order and compel us
To follow his behest.

He ruled us without malice,
But as if he owned us all,
A sultan in his palace
With his servants at his call.

Those calls came fast and faster,
Our service still we gave,
Till I who had been master
Had grown to be his slave.

He claimed with grasping gestures
Each thing of price he saw,
Watches and rings and vestures,
His will the only law.

In vain had I commanded,
In vain I struggled still,
Servants and wife were banded
To do the stranger's will.

And then in deep dejection
 It came to me one day,
That my own wife's affection
 Had been beguiled away.

Our love had known no danger,
 So certain had it been !
And now to think a stranger
 Should dare to step between.

I saw him lie and hearken
 To the little songs she sung,
And when the shadows darken
 I could hear his lisping tongue.

They would sit in chambers shady,
 When the light was growing dim,
Ah, my fickle-hearted lady !
 With your arm embracing him.

So, at last, lest he divide us,
 I would put them to the test.
There was no one there beside us,
 Save this interloping guest.

So I took my stand before them,
 Very silent and erect,
My accusing glance passed o'er them,
 Though with no observed effect.

But the lamp light shone upon her,
And I saw each tell-tale feature,
As I cried, " Now, on your honour,
Do or don't you love the creature ? "

But her answer seemed evasive,
It was " Ducky-doodle-doo !
If his mummy loves um babby,
Doesn't daddums love um too ? "

Bendy's Sermon

[Bendigo, the well-known Nottingham prize fighter, became converted to religion and preached at revival meetings throughout the country.]

YOU didn't know of Bendigo! Well, that knocks me out!

Who's your board school teacher? What's he been about?

Chock-a-block with fairy-tales—full of useless cram,
And never heard o' Bendigo, the pride of Nottingham!

Bendy's short for Bendigo. You should see him peel!
Half of him was whalebone, half of him was steel,
Fightin' weight eleven ten, five foot nine in height,
Always ready to oblige if you want a fight.

I could talk of Bendigo from here to kingdom come,
I guess before I ended you would wish your dad was
dumb,

I'd tell you how he fought Ben Caunt, and how the deaf
'un fell,

But the game is done, and the men are gone—and maybe
it's as well.

Bendy he turned Methodist—he said he felt a call,
He stumped the country preachin' and you bet he filled
the hall,

If you seed him in the pulpit, a'bleatin' like a lamb,
You'd never know bold Bendigo, the pride of Nottingham.

His hat was like a funeral, he'd got a waiter's coat,
With a hallelujah collar and a choker round his throat,
His pals would laugh and say in chaff that Bendigo was
right

In takin' on the devil, since he'd no one else to fight.

But he was very earnest, improvin' day by day,
A-workin' and a-preachin' just as his duty lay,
But the devil he was waitin', and in the final bout
He hit him hard below his guard and knocked poor
Bendy out.

Now I'll tell you how it happened. He was preachin'
down at Brum,
He was billed just like a circus, you should see the people
come,
The chapel it was crowded, and in the foremost row
There was half a dozen bruisers who'd a grudge at
Bendigo.

There was Tommy Platt of Bradford, Solly Jones of
Perry Bar,
Long Connor from the Bull Ring, the same wot drew
with Carr,

Jack Ball the fightin' gunsmith, Joe Murphy from the
Mews,
And Iky Moss, the bettin' boss, the Champion of the
Jews.

A very pretty handful a-sittin' in a string,
Full of beer and impudence, ripe for anything,
Sittin' in a string there, right under Bendy's nose,
If his message was for sinners, he could make a start on
those.

Soon he heard them chaffin': "Hi, Bendy! Here's
a go!"

"How much are you coppin' by this Jump to Glory
show?"

"Stow it, Bendy! Left the ring! Mighty spry of
you!"

Didn't everybody know the ring was leavin' you?"

Bendy fairly sweated as he stood above and prayed,
"Look down, O Lord, and grip me with a strangle hold!"
he said.

"Fix me with a strangle hold! Put a stop on me!
I'm slippin', Lord, I'm slippin' and I'm clingin' hard to
Thee!"

But the roughs they kept on chaffin' and the uproar it
was such
That the preacher in the pulpit might be talkin' double
Dutch,

Till a workin' man he shouted out, a-jumpin' to his feet,

"Give us a lead, your reverence, and heave 'em in the street."

Then Bendy said, "Good Lord, since first I left my sinful ways,

Thou knowest that to Thee alone I've given up my days,
But now, dear Lord"—and here he laid his Bible on the shelf—

"I'll take with your permission, just five minutes for myself."

He vaulted from the pulpit like a tiger from a den,
They say it was a lovely sight to see him floor his men ;
Right and left, and left and right, straight and true and hard,

Till the Ebenezer Chapel looked more like a knacker's yard.

Platt was standin' on his back and lookin' at his toes,
Solly Jones of Perry Bar was feelin' for his nose,
Connor of the Bull Ring had all that he could do
Rakin' for his ivories that lay about the pew.

Jack Ball the fightin' gunsmith was in a peaceful sleep,
Joe Murphy lay across him, all tied up in a heap,
Five of them was twisted in a tangle on the floor,
And Iky Moss, the bettin' boss, had sprinted for the door.

Five repentant fightin' men, sitting in a row,
Listenin' to words of grace from Mister Bendigo,
Listenin' to his reverence—all as good as gold,
Pretty little baa-lambs, gathered to the fold.

So that's the way that Bendy ran his mission in the
slum,
And preached the Holy Gospel to the fightin' men of
Brum,
“The Lord,” said he, “has given me His message from
on high,
And if you interrupt Him, I will know the reason why.”

But to think of all your schoolin', clean wasted, thrown
away,
Darned if I can make out what you're learnin' all the day,
Grubbin' up old fairy-tales, fillin' up with cram,
And didn't know of Bendigo, the pride of Nottingham !

Compensation

THE grime is on the window pane,
Pale the London sunbeams fall,
And show the smudge of mildew stain,
Which lies on the distempered wall.

I am a cripple, as you see,
And here I lie, a broken thing,
But God has given flight to me,
That mocks the swiftest eagle wing.

For if I will to see or hear,
Quick as the thought my spirit flies,
And lo ! the picture flashes clear
Through all the mist of centuries.

I can recall the Tigris' strand,
Where once the Turk and Tartar met,
When the great Lord of Samarcand
Struck down the Sultan Bajazet.

Under a ten-league swirl of dust
The roaring battle swings and sways,
Now reeling down, now upward thrust,
The crescent sparkles through the haze.

I see the Janissaries fly,
I see the chain-mailed leader fall,
I hear the Tekbar clear and high,
The true believer's battle-call.

And tossing o'er the press I mark
The horse-tail banner over all,
Shaped like the smudge of mildew dark
That lies on the distempered wall.

And thus the meanest thing I see
Will set a scene within my brain,
And every sound that comes to me
Will bring strange echoes back again.

Hark now ! In rhythmic monotone,
You hear the murmur of the mart,
The low, deep, unremitting moan
That comes from weary London's heart.

But I can change it to the hum
Of multitudinous acclaim,
When triple-walled Byzantium
Re-echoes the Imperial name.

I hear the beat of armed feet,
The legions clanking on their way,
The long shout runs from street to street,
With rolling drum and trumpet bray.

So I hear it rising, falling,
Till it dies away once more,
And I hear the costers calling
'Mid the weary London roar.

Who shall pity then the lameness,
Which still holds me from the ground ?
Who commiserate the sameness
Of the scene that girds me round ?

Though I lie a broken wreck,
Though I seem to want for all,
Still the world is at my beck
And the ages at my call.

The Banner of Progress

THERE'S a banner in our van,
And we follow as we can,
For at times we scarce can see it,
And at times it flutters high.
But however it be flown,
Still we know it as our own,
And we follow, ever follow,
Where we see the banner fly.

In the struggle and the strife,
In the weariness of life,
The banner-man may stumble,
He may falter in the fight.
But if one should fail or slip,
There are other hands to grip,
And it's forward, ever forward,
From the darkness to the light.

Hope

FAITH may break on reason,
Faith may prove a treason
To that highest gift
That is granted by Thy grace ;
But Hope ! Ah, let us cherish
Some spark that may not perish,
Some tiny spark to cheer us,
As we wander through the waste !

A little lamp beside us,
A little lamp to guide us,
Where the path is rocky,
Where the road is steep ;
That when the light falls dimmer,
Still some God-sent glimmer
May hold us steadfast ever,
To the track that we should keep.

Hope for the trending of it,
Hope for the ending of it,
Hope for all around us,
That it ripens in the sun.
Hope for what is waning,
Hope for what is gaining,
Hope for what is waiting
When the long day is done.

Hope that He, the nameless,
May still be best and blameless,
Nor ever end His highest
With the earthworm and the slime.

Hope that o'er the border
There lies a land of order,
With higher law to reconcile
The lower laws of Time.

Hope that every vexed life
Finds within that next life
Something that may recompense,
Something that may cheer.
And that perchance the lowest one
Is truly but the slowest one,
Quickened by the sorrow
Which is waiting for him here.

Religio Medici

GOD'S own best will bide the test,
And God's own worst will fall ;
But, best or worst or last or first,
He ordereth it all.

For *all* is good, if understood,
(Ah, could we understand !)
And right and ill are tools of skill
Held in His either hand.

The harlot and the anchorite,
The martyr and the rake,
Deftly He fashions each aright,
Its vital part to take.

Wisdom He makes to form the fruit
Where the high blossoms be ;
And Lust to kill the weaker shoot,
And Drink to trim the tree.

And Holiness that so the bole
Be solid at the core ;
And Plague and Fever, that the whole
Be changing evermore.

He strews the microbes in the lung,
The blood-clot in the brain ;
With test and test He picks the best,
Then tests them once again.

He tests the body and the mind,
He rings them o'er and o'er ;
And if they crack, He throws them back,
And fashions them once more.

He chokes the infant throat with slime,
He sets the ferment free ;
He builds the tiny tube of lime
That blocks the artery.

He lets the youthful dreamer store
Great projects in his brain,
Until He drops the fungus spore
That smears them out again.

He stores the milk that feeds the babe,
He dulls the tortured nerve ;
He gives a hundred joys of sense
Where few or none might serve.

And still He trains the branch of good
Where the high blossoms be,
And wieldeth still the shears of ill
To prune and prune His tree.

Man's Limitation

MAN says that He is jealous,
Man says that He is wise,
Man says that He is watching
From His throne beyond the skies.
But perchance the arch above us
Is one great mirror's span,
And the Figure seen so dimly
Is a vast reflected man.

If it is love that gave us
A thousand blossoms bright,
Why should that love not save us
From poisoned aconite ?
If this man blesses sunshine
Which sets his fields aglow,
Shall that man curse the tempest
That lays his harvest low ?

If you may sing His praises
For health He gave to you,
What of this spine-curved cripple,
Shall he sing praises too ?

If you may justly thank Him
For strength in mind and limb,
Then what of yonder weakling—
Must he give thanks to Him ?

Ah dark, too dark, the riddle !
The tiny brain too small !
We call and fondly listen
For answer to that call.
There comes no word to tell us
Why this and that should be,
Why you should live with sorrow,
And joy should live with me.

Mind and Matter

GR^EAT was his soul and high his aim,
He viewed the world, and he could trace
A lofty plan to leave his name
Immortal 'mid the human race.
But as he planned, and as he worked,
The fungus spore within him lurked.

Though dark the present and the past,
The future seemed a sunlit thing.
Still ever deeper and more vast,
The changes that he hoped to bring.
His was the will to dare and do ;
But still the stealthy fungus grew.

Alas the plans that came to nought !
Alas the soul that thrilled in vain !
The sunlit future that he sought
Was but a mirage of the brain.
Where now the wit ? Where now the will ?
The fungus is the master still.

Darkness

A GENTLEMAN of wit and charm,
A kindly heart, a cleanly mind,
One who was quick with hand or purse
To lift the burden of his kind.
A brain well balanced and mature,
A soul that shrank from all things base,
So rode he forth that winter day,
Complete in every mortal grace.

And then—the blunder of a horse,
The crash upon the frozen clods,
And—Death ? Ah ! no such dignity,
But Life, all twisted and at odds !
At odds in body and in soul,
Degraded to some brutish state,
A being loathsome and malign,
Debased, obscene, degenerate.

Pathology ? The case is clear,
The diagnosis is exact ;
A bone depressed, a hæmorrhage,
The pressure on a nervous tract.
Theology ? Ah, there's the rub !
Since brain and soul together fade,
Then when the brain is dead—enough !
Lord help us, for we need Thine aid !

A Woman's Love

I AM not blind—I understand ;
I see him loyal, good and wise,
I feel decision in his hand,
I read his honour in his eyes.
Manliest among men is he
With every gift and grace to clothe him ;
He never loved a girl but me—
And I—I loathe him !—loathe him !

The other ! Ah ! I value him
Precisely at his proper rate,
A creature of caprice and whim,
Unstable, weak, importunate.
His thoughts are set on paltry gain—
You only tell me what I see—
I know him selfish, cold and vain ;
But, oh ! he's all the world to me !

By the North Sea

HER cheek was wet with North Sea spray,
We walked where tide and shingle meet,
The long waves rolled from far away
To purr in ripples at our feet.
And as we walked it seemed to me
That three old friends had met that day,
The old, old sky, the old, old sea,
And love, which is as old as they.

Out seaward hung the brooding mist,
We saw it rolling, fold on fold,
And marked the great Sun alchemist
Turn all its leaden edge to gold.
Look well, look well, oh lady mine,
The grey below, the gold above,
For so the greyest life may shine
All golden in the light of love.

December's Snow

THE bloom is on the may once more,
The chestnut buds have burst anew ;
But, darling, all our springs are o'er,
'Tis winter still for me and you.
We plucked Life's blossoms long ago,
What's left is but December's snow.

But winter has its joys as fair,
The gentler joys, aloof, apart ;
The snow may lie upon our hair
But never, darling, in our heart.
Sweet were the springs of long ago
But sweeter still December's snow.

Yes, long ago, and yet to me
It seems a thing of yesterday,
The shade beneath the willow tree,
The word you looked but feared to say.
Ah ! when I learned to love you so
What recked we of December's snow ?

But swift the ruthless seasons sped
And swifter still they speed away ;
What though they bow the dainty head
And fleck the raven hair with grey ?
The boy and girl of long ago
Are laughing through the veil of snow.

Shakespeare's Expostulation

MASTERS, I sleep not quiet in my grave,
There where they laid me, by the Avon shore,
In that some crazy wights have set it forth
By arguments most false and fanciful,
Analogy and far-drawn inference,
That Francis Bacon, Earl of Verulam
(A man whom I remember in old days,
A learned judge with sly adhesive palms,
To which the suitor's gold was wont to stick)—
That this same Verulam had writ the plays
Which were the fancies of my frolic brain.
What can they urge to dispossess the crown
Which all my comrades and the whole loud world
Did in my lifetime lay upon my brow ?
Look straitly at these arguments and see
How witless and how fondly slight they be.

Imprimis, they have urged that, being born
In the mean compass of a paltry town,
I could not in my youth have trimmed my mind
To such an eagle pitch, but must be found,
Like the hedge sparrow, somewhere near the ground.

Bethink you, sirs, that though I was denied
The learning which in colleges is found,
Yet may a hungry brain still find its food

Wherever books may lie or men may be ;
And though perchance by Isis or by Cam
The meditative, philosophic plant
May best luxuriate ; yet some would say
That in the task of limning mortal life
A fitter preparation might be made
Besides the banks of Thames. And then again,
If I be suspect, in that I was not
A fellow of a college, how, I pray,
Will Jonson pass, or Marlowe, or the rest,
Whose measured verse treads with as proud a gait
As that which was my own ? Whence did they suck
This honey that they stored ? Can you recite
The vantages which each of these has had
And I had not ? Or is the argument
That my Lord Verulam hath written all,
And covers in his wide-embracing self
The stolen fame of twenty smaller men ?

You prate about my learning. I would urge
My want of learning rather as a proof
That I am still myself. Have I not traced
A seaboard to Bohemia, and made
The cannons roar a whole wide century
Before the first was forged ? Think you, then,
That he, the ever-learned Verulam,
Would have erred thus ? So may my very faults
In their gross falseness prove that I am true,
And by that falseness gender truth in you.
And what is left ? They say that they have found
A script, wherein the writer tells my Lord
He is a secret poet. True enough !

But surely now that secret is o'er past.
Have you not read his poems ? Know you not
That in our day a learned chancellor
Might better far dispense unjustest law
Than be suspect of such frivolity
As lies in verse ? Therefore his poetry
Was secret. Now that he is gone
'Tis so no longer. You may read his verse,
And judge if mine be better or be worse :
Read and pronounce ! The meed of praise is thine ;
But still let his be his and mine be mine.

I say no more ; but how can you forswear
Outspoken Jonson, he who knew me well ?
So, too, the epitaph which still you read ?
Think you they faced my sepulchre with lies—
Gross lies, so evident and palpable
That every townsman must have wot of it,
And not a worshipper within the church
But must have smiled to see the marbled fraud ?
Surely this touches you ? But if by chance
My reasoning still leaves you obdurate,
I'll lay one final plea. I pray you look
On my presentment, as it reaches you.
My features shall be sponsors for my fame,
My brow shall speak when Shakespeare's voice is dumb,
And be his warrant in an age to come.

The Empire

1902

THEY said that it had feet of clay,
That its fall was sure and quick.
In the flames of yesterday
All the clay was burned to brick.
When they carved our epitaph
And marked us doomed beyond recall,
“We are,” we answered, with a laugh,
“The Empire that declines to fall.”

A Voyage

1909

BREATHING the stale and stuffy air
Of office or consulting room,
Our thoughts will wander back to where
We heard the low Atlantic boom,
And, creaming underneath our screw,
We watched the swirling waters break,
Silver filagrees on blue
Spreading fan-wise in our wake.

Cribbed within the city's fold,
Fettered to our daily round,
We'll conjure up the haze of gold
Which ringed the wide horizon round.
And still we'll break the sordid day
By fleeting visions far and fair,
The silver shield of Vigo Bay,
The long brown cliff of Finisterre.

Where once the Roman galley sped,
Or Moorish corsair spread his sail,
By wooded shore, or sunlit head,
By barren hill or sea-washed vale

We took our way. But we can swear
That many countries we have scanned,
But never one that could compare
With our own island mother-land.

The dream is o'er. No more we view
The shores of Christian or of Turk,
But turning to our tasks anew,
We bend us to our wonted work.
But there will come to you and me
Some glimpse of spacious days gone by,
The wide, wide stretches of the sea,
The mighty curtain of the sky.

The Orphanage

WHEN, ere the tangled web is reft,
The kid-gloved villain scowls and sneers,
And hapless innocence is left
With no assets save sighs and tears,
'Tis then, just then, that in there stalks
The hero, watchful of her needs,
He talks, Great heavens, how he talks !
But we forgive him, for his deeds.

Life is the drama here to-day
And Death the villain of the plot.
It is a realistic play ;
Shall it end well or shall it not ?
The hero ? Oh, the hero's part
Is vacant—to be played by you.
Then act it well ! An orphan's heart
May beat the lighter if you do.

Sexagenarius Loquitur

FROM our youth to our age
We have passed each stage
In old immemorial order,
From primitive days
Through flowery ways
With love like a hedge as their border.
Ah, youth was a kingdom of joy,
And we were the king and the queen,
When I was a year
Short of thirty, my dear,
And you were just nearing nineteen.

But dark follows light
And day follows night
As the old planet circles the sun ;
And nature still traces
Her score on our faces
And tallies the years as they run.
Have they chilled the old warmth in your heart ?
I swear that they have not in mine,
Though I am a year
Short of sixty, my dear,
And you are—well, say thirty-nine.

Night Voices

FATHER, father, who is that a-whispering ?
Who is it who whispers in the wood ?
You say it is the breeze
As it sighs among the trees,
But there's someone who whispers in the wood.

Father, father, who is that a-murmuring ?
Who is it who murmurs in the night ?
You say it is the roar
Of the wave upon the shore,
But there's someone who murmurs in the night.

Father, father, who is that who laughs at us ?
Who is it who chuckles in the glen ?
Oh, father, let us go,
For the light is burning low,
And there's somebody laughing in the glen.

Father, father, tell me what you're waiting for,
Tell me why your eyes are on the door.
It is dark and it is late,
But you sit so still and straight,
Ever staring, ever smiling, at the door.

The Message

(From HEINE)

UP, dear laddie, saddle quick
And spring upon the leather !
Away post haste o'er fell and waste
With whip and spur together !

And when you win to Duncan's kin
Draw one of them aside
And shortly say, " Which daughter may
We welcome as the bride ? "

And if he says " It is the dark,"
Then quickly bring the mare,
But if he says " It is the blonde,"
Then you have time to spare.

But buy from off the saddler man
The stoutest cord you see,
Ride at your ease and say no word,
But bring it back to me.

The Echo

(After HEINE)

THROUGH the lonely mountain land
There rode a cavalier.
“ Oh, ride I to my darling’s arms,
Or to the grave so drear ? ”
The Echo answered clear,
“ The grave so drear.”

So onward rode the cavalier
And clouded was his brow.
“ If now my hour be truly come,
Ah well, it must be now ! ”
The Echo answered low,
“ It must be now.”

Advice to a Young Author

FIRST begin
Taking in.
Cargo stored,
All aboard,
Think about
Giving out.
Empty ship,
Useless trip !

Never strain
Weary brain.
Hardly fit,
Wait a bit !
After rest
Comes the best.
Sitting still,
Let it fill ;
Never press ;
Nerve stress
Always shows.
Nature knows.

Critics kind,
Never mind !
Critics flatter,
No matter !
Critics curse,
None the worse !
Critics blame,
All the same !
Do your best.
Hang the rest !

The Farewell

THE SOUL TO THE BODY

SO sorry, dear old friend, you have to die,
We've been such goodly partners, you and I,
Such comrades in our work, and mates at play,
We've lived together many a happy day.
It's only lately that you disappoint,
Sluggish in limb and clogged in every joint ;
But that is not your fault, for grim old Time
Has blocked your tiny arteries with lime,
And cut your sap and left its withering trace
In every wrinkle of your dear old face.
No, faithful comrade, I have nought but praise ;
If there were fault, 'twas mine. You walked the ways
On which I led you, be they low or high,
Thanks for all services ! And so good-bye !

THE BODY TO THE SOUL

Good-bye, old friend ! You've used me many a year,
And, as you say, I'm rather out of gear,
And quite disposed to rest. No doubt you'll find
Some other form congenial to your mind,
And moulded on this wreck you leave behind,
For that, they say, persists. May it be one
That serves you faithfully, as I have done.

Of course its right our partnership to sever
Since I am old and you as young as ever.
I'll find some cancer cell or handy germ
To bring my waning forces to a term
And break the framework of the old machine.
Then down at Woking or at Golder's Green
They'll do the trick. And you, friend, from afar,
Will see the oaken chest or cinder jar,
And know that I have gone without a pang
Back to the elements from which I sprang.

“ Now then, Smith ! ”

[The incident quoted is literally correct.]

’T WAS on Messina’s day of wrath,
When one wild morning laid her low,
On either side of that grey path
The cinder piles were still aglow.
Down it there sauntered Skipper Wise,
The Master of the Roderic Dhu,
And at his heels, with wondering eyes,
A dozen of her collier crew.

But hark that cry ! Above their heads,
There hung a riven shaking wall,
From bulging base to melting leads
Was sheer a hundred foot of fall ;
And there, half balanced on a sill,
There clung a little frightened maid,
Her white face staring down, and still
She waved her hand and cried for aid.

The Skipper cocked his thumb in air,
“ Now then, Smith ! ” he curtly said.
The seaman marked the child up there,
And growled an oath and scratched his head.

They saw him wet his horny paw,
They saw him test the shaking wall,
They saw him creep from flaw to flaw,
They saw him slip, they saw him fall,
And yet again regain his grip,
And find a crevice for his stand,
And on with jerk and spring and slip,
Until he clutched the downstretched hand.

He braced his shoulder to the strain,
He caught her as she sank all spent,
And with her balanced turned again
To make his terrible descent.
With pause for thought and pause for breath,
While the dark rabble prayed and cried,
Until from that high place of death
He bore her to her mother's side.

"Now then, Smith!" the skipper said,
And at the word the thing was done.
But where is Smith, whose hand and head
Have played a match with death and won?
He's just a chap among the chaps,
Unknown, unhonoured, as before,
And there he'll stay until perhaps
The world has need of him once more.

So has it been in every age,
In every age it still shall be,
Smith's name is not on history's page,
But who has made that page save he?

The Warrior chief can frame his plan
 With all that wisdom can devise,
 And then,—ah, then it needs the man,
 And “Now then, Smith!” he loudly cries.

The Statesman in a parlous place
 May totter on unstable ground,
 His blunders rise before his face,
 And no redemption may be found.
 When all is lost, ’mid doubts and fears,
 There’s one more card that he can play.
 It’s “Now then, Smith!” and Smith appears
 To save him for some later day.

And when War raised its fearsome shape
 And Europe shrank before its form,
 Our England stood with no escape,
 Unarmed before the rising storm,
 ’Twas Smith to whom at once we turned.
 Five million Smiths obeyed the call.
 To Smith the praise that he has earned,
 For by his blood he saved us all.

Now then, Smith!
 You’re neither rich nor gifted,
 But here’s a job that must be done,
 A job we may not shirk.
 Now then, Smith!
 Get down to it and shift it!
 You’re just the common working bee,
 So work, you beggar, work!

To my Lady

“WHICH of these four,” the Angel said,
“Will be your life-long choice,
The maiden with the kindest heart,
Or with the sweetest voice,
Or she who has the dearest form,
With every gentle grace,
Or she who shows the noblest soul
Upon the loveliest face ? ”

Lost in deepest thought I sat,
And viewed these maidens four,
And first chose this and then chose that,
And doubted more and more ;
A kindly heart is treasure trove,
A perfect voice is rare,
A graceful form is Heaven’s gift
And so is beauty rare.

The Angel laughed to see my doubt
And laid his hand on me,
He smoothed the puzzled wrinkles out,
“ I’ll set it right,” said he,
“ Each of the four you wish as mate ;
Since that can not be done,
This lady saves you all debate,
By being all in one.”

A Reminiscence of Cricket

ONCE in my heyday of cricket,
Oh, day I shall ever recall !
I captured that glorious wicket,
The greatest, the grandest of all.

Before me he stands like a vision,
Bearded and burly and brown,
A smile of good-humoured derision
As he waits for the first to come down.

A statue from Thebes or from Cnossus,
A Hercules shrouded in white,
Assyrian Bull-like Colossus,
He stands in his might.

With the beard of a Goth or a Vandal,
His bat hanging ready and free,
His great hairy hands on the handle
And his menacing eyes upon me.

And I—I had tricks for the rabbits,
The feeble of mind or of eye,
I could see all the duffer's bad habits
And guess where his ruin might lie.

The capture of such might elate one,
But it seemed like some horrible jest
That I should serve tosh to the great one,
Who had broken the hearts of the best.

Well, here goes ! Good Lord, what a rotter !
Such a sitter as never was dreamt,
It was clay in the hands of the Potter,
But he tapped it with gentle contempt.

The second was better—a leetle,
It was low, but was nearly long hop,
As the housemaid comes down on the beetle,
So down came the bat with a chop.

He was sizing me up with some wonder,
My broken-kneed action and ways,
I could see the grim menace from under
The striped peak that shaded his gaze.

The third was a gift—or it looked it,
A foot off the wicket or so,
His huge figure swooped as he hooked it,
His great body swung to the blow.

Still when my dreams are night-marish
I picture that terrible smite,
It was meant for a neighbouring parish
Or any old place out of sight.

But—yes, there's a but to the story—
The blade swished a trifle too low,
Oh wonder ! and vision of glory !
It was up like a shaft from a bow.

Up, up, like the towering game bird,
Up, up, to a speck in the blue,
And then coming down like the same bird
Dead straight on the line that it flew.

Good Lord, was it mine ! Such a soarer
Would call for a pair of safe hands ;
None safer than Derbyshire Storer—
And there, face uplifted, he stands.

Wicket-keep Storer, the knowing,
Wary and steady of nerve,
Watching it falling and growing,
Marking the pace and the curve.

I stood with my two eyes fixed on it,
Paralysed—helpless—inert,
There was “ plunk ” as the gloves shut upon it,
And he cuddled it up to his shirt.

Out, beyond question or wrangle !
Homeward he lurched to his lunch,
His bat was tucked up at an angle,
His great shoulders curved to a hunch.

Walking he rumbled and grumbled,
 Scolding himself, and not me,
One glove was off, and he fumbled
 Twisting the other hand free.

Did I give Storer the credit,
 The thanks he so splendidly earned ?
It was mere empty talk if I said it,
 For Grace was already returned.

The Guards Came Through
And other Poems

The Guards Came Through

MEN of the Twenty-first,
Up by the Chalk Pit Wood,
Weak from our wounds and our thirst,
Wanting our sleep and our food
After a day and a night.

God ! shall I ever forget ?
Beaten and broke in the fight,
But sticking it, sticking it yet,
Trying to hold the line,
Fainting and spent and done ;
Always the thud and the whine,
Always the yell of the Hun.
Northumberland, Lancaster, York,
Durham and Somerset,
Fighting alone, worn to the bone,
But sticking it, sticking it yet.

Never a message of hope,
Never a word of cheer,
Fronting Hill 70's shell-swept slope,
With the dull, dead plain in our rear ;
Always the shriek of the shell,
Always the roar of the burst,
Always the tortures of Hell,
As waiting and wincing we cursed

Our luck, the guns, and the Boche.

When our Corporal shouted "Stand to!"
And I hear some one cry, "Clear the front for
the Guards!"—

And the Guards came through.

Our throats they were parched and hot,

But, Lord! if you'd heard the cheer,
Irish, Welsh and Scot,

Coldstream and Grenadier—

Two Brigades, if you please,

Dressing as straight as a hem.

We, we were down on our knees,

Praying for us and for them,

Praying with tear-wet cheek,

Praying with outstretched hand.

Lord! I could speak for a week,

But how could you understand?

How could your cheeks be wet?

Such feelin's don't come to you;

But how can me or my mates forget

How the Guards came through?

"Five yards left extend!"

It passed from rank to rank,

And line after line, with never a bend,

And a touch of the London swank.

A trifle of swank and dash,

Cool as a home parade,

Twinkle, glitter and flash,

Flinching never a shade,

With the shrapnel right in their face,
Doing their Hyde Park stunt,
Swinging along at an easy pace,
Arms at the trail, eyes front.

Man ! it was great to see !

Man ! it was great to do !

It's a cot, and hospital ward for me,
But I'll tell them in Blighty wherever I be,
How the Guards came through.

Victrix

HOW was it then with England ?
Her faith was true to her plighted word,
Her strong hand closed on her blunted sword,
Her heart rose high to the foeman's hate,
She walked with God on the hills of Fate—
And all was well with England.

How was it then with England ?
Her soul was wrung with loss and pain,
Her face was grey with her heart's-blood drain,
But her falcon eyes were hard and bright,
Austere and cold as an ice-cave's light—
And all was well with England.

How was it then with England ?
Little she said to foe or friend,
True, heart true, to the uttermost end,
Her passion cry was the scathe she wrought,
In flame and steel she voiced her thought—
And all was well with England.

How was it then with England ?
With drooping sword and bended head,
She turned apart and mourned her dead,

Sad sky above, sad earth beneath,
She walked with God in the Vale of Death—
Ah, woe the day for England !

How is it now with England ?
She sees upon her mist-girt path
Dim drifting shapes of fear and wrath.
Hold high the heart ! Bend low the knee !
She has been guided, and will be—
And all is well with England.

Those Others

WHERE are those others?—the men who stood
In the first wild spate of the German flood,
And paid full price with their heart's best blood
For the saving of you and me :
French's Contemptibles, haggard and lean,
Allenby's lads of the cavalry screen,
Gunnery who fell in Battery L,
And Guardsmen of Landrecies ?

Where are those others who fought and fell,
Outmanned, outgunned and scant of shell,
On the deadly curve of the Ypres hell,
Barring the coast to the last ?
Where are our laddies who died out there,
From Poelcapelle to Festubert,
When the days grew short and the poplars bare
In the cold November blast ?

For us their toil and for us their pain,
The sordid ditch in the sodden plain,
The Flemish fog and the driving rain,
The cold that cramped and froze ;
The weary night, the chill bleak day,
When earth was dark and sky was grey,
And the ragged weeds in the dripping clay
Were all God's world to those.

Where are those others in this glad time,
When the standards wave and the joybells chime,
And London stands with outstretched hands

Waving her children in ?

Athwart our joy still comes the thought
Of the dear dead boys, whose lives have bought
All that sweet victory has brought
To us who lived to win.

To each his dreams, and mine to me,
But as the shadows fall I see
That ever-glorious company—

The men who bide out there.

Rifleman, Highlander, Fusilier,
Airman and Sapper and Grenadier,
With flaunting banner and wave and cheer,
They flow through the darkening air.

And yours are there, and so are mine,
Rank upon rank and line on line,
With smiling lips and eyes that shine,
And bearing proud and high.

Past they go with their measured tread,
These are the victors, these—the dead !
Ah, sink the knee and bare the head
As the hallowed host goes by !

Haig is Moving

AUGUST 1918

HAIG is moving !
Three plain words are all that matter,
Mid the gossip and the chatter,
Hopes in speeches, fears in papers,
Pessimistic froth and vapours—
Haig is moving !

Haig is moving !
We can turn from German scheming,
From humanitarian dreaming,
From assertions, contradictions,
Twisted facts and solemn fictions—
Haig is moving !

Haig is moving !
All the weary idle phrases,
Empty blamings, empty praises,
Here's an end to their recital,
There is only one thing vital—
Haig is moving !

Haig is moving !

He is moving, he is gaining,
And the whole hushed world is straining,
Straining, yearning, for the vision
Of the doom and the decision—

Haig is moving !

The Guns in Sussex

LIGHT green of grass and richer green of bush
Slope upwards to the darkest green of fir.
How still ! How deathly still ! And yet the hush
Shivers and trembles with some subtle stir,
Some far-off throbbing like a muffled drum,
Beaten in broken rhythm oversea,
To play the last funereal march of some
Who die to-day that Europe may be free.

The deep-blue heaven, curving from the green,
Spans with its shimmering arch the flowery zone ;
In all God's earth there is no gentler scene,
And yet I hear that awesome monotone.
Above the circling midge's piping shrill,
And the long droning of the questing bee,
Above all sultry summer sounds, it still
Mutters its ceaseless menaces to me.

And as I listen, all the garden fair
Darkens to plains of misery and death,
And, looking past the roses, I see there
Those sordid furrows with the rising breath
Of all things foul and black. My heart is hot
Within me as I view it, and I cry,
" Better the misery of these men's lot
Than all the peace that comes to such as I ! "

And strange that in the pauses of the sound
I hear the children's laughter as they roam,
And then their mother calls, and all around
Rise up the gentle murmurs of a home.
But still I gaze afar, and at the sight
My whole soul softens to its heart-felt prayer,
"Spirit of Justice, Thou for whom they fight,
Ah, turn in mercy to our lads out there !

"The froward peoples have deserved Thy wrath,
And on them is the Judgment as of old,
But if they wandered from the hallowed path
Yet is their retribution manifold.
Behold all Europe writhing on the rack,
The sins of fathers grinding down the sons !
How long, O Lord ? " He sends no answer back,
But still I hear the mutter of the guns.

Ypres

SEPTEMBER, 1915

PUSH on, my Lord of Württemberg, across the
Flemish Fen !

See where the lure of Ypres calls you !

There's just one ragged British line of Plumer's weary
men ;

It's true they held you off before, but venture it again,

Come, try your luck, whatever fate befalls you !

You've been some little time, my Lord. Perhaps you
scarce remember

The far-off early days of that resistance.

Was it in October last ? Or was it in November ?

And now the leaves are turning and you stand in mid-
September

Still staring at the Belfry in the distance.

Can you recall the fateful day—a day of drifting skies,

When you started on the famous Calais onset ?

Can it be the War-Lord blundered when he urged the
enterprise ?

For surely it's a weary while since first before your eyes

That old Belfry rose against the sunset.

You held council at your quarters when the budding
Alexanders

And the Pickel-haubed Cæsars gave their reasons.

Was there one amongst that bristle-headed circle of
commanders

Ever ventured the opinion that a little town of Flanders
Would hold you pounded here through all the seasons ?

You all clasped hands upon it. You would break the
British line,

You would smash a road to westward with your host,
The howitzers should thunder and the Uhlan lances shine
Till Calais heard the blaring of the distant "Wacht am
Rhein,"

As you topped the grassy uplands of the coast.
Said the Graf von Feuer-Essen, "It's a fact beyond dis-
cussion,

That man to man we can outfight the foe.
There is valour in the French, there is patience in the
Russian,
But blend all war-like virtues and you get the lordly
Prussian,"

And the bristle-headed murmured, "*Das ist so.*"

"And the British," cried another, "they are mercenary
cattle,

Without one noble impulse of the soul,
Degenerate and drunken ; if the dollars chink and rattle,
'Tis the only sort of music that will call them to the
battle."

And all the bristle-headed cried, "*Ja wohl !*"

And so next day your battle rolled across the Menin
Plain,

Where Capper's men stood lonely to your wrath.
You broke him, and you broke him, but you broke him
all in vain,

For he and his contemptibles kept closing up again,
And the khaki bar was still across your path.

And on the day when Gheluvelt lay smoking in the
sun,

When Von Deimling stormed so hotly in the van,
You smiled as Haig reeled backwards and you thought
him on the run,

But, alas for dreams that vanish, for before the day was
done

It was you, my Lord of Württemberg, that ran.

A dreary day was that—but another came, more dreary,

When the Guard from Arras led your fierce attacks,
Spruce and splendid in the morning were the Potsdam
Grenadiere,

But not so spruce that evening when they staggered
spent and weary,

With those cursed British storming at their backs.

You knew—your spies had told you—that the ranks
were scant and thin,

That the guns were short of shell and very few,
By all Bernhardt's maxims you were surely bound to
win,

There's the open town before you. Haste, my Lord,
and enter in,
Or the War-Lord may have telegrams for you.

Then came the rainy winter, when the price was ever
dearer,
Every time you neared the prize of which you
dreamed,
Each day the Belfry faced you but you never brought
it nearer,
Each night you saw it clearly but you never saw it
clearer.
Ah, what a weary time it must have seemed !

At last there came the Easter when you loosed the
coward gases,
Surely you have got the rascals now !
You could see them spent and choking as you watched
them thro' your glasses,
Yes, they choke, but never waver, and again the moment
passes
Without one leaf of laurel for your brow.

Then at Hooge you had them helpless, for their guns
were one to ten,
And you blasted trench and traverse at your will,
You had them dead and buried—but they still sprang up
again.
“*Donnerwetter !*” cried your Lordship, “*Donnerwetter !*”
cried your men,
For their very ghosts were guarding Ypres still.

Active, Guards, Reserve—men of every corps and name
That the bugles of the War-Lord muster in,
Each in turn you tried them, but the story was the
same;
Play it how you would, my Lord, you never won the
game,
No, never in a twelvemonth did you win.

A year, my Lord of Württemberg—a year, or nearly so,
Since first you faced the British *vis-à-vis* !
Your learned Commandanten are the men who ought
to know,
But to ordinary mortals it would seem a trifle slow,
If you really mean to travel to the sea.

If you cannot *straf* the British, since they *strafen* you so
well,
You can safely smash the town that lies so near,
So it's down with arch and buttress, down with belfry
and with bell,
And it's *hoch* the seven-seven that can drop the petrol
shell
On the shrines that pious hands have loved to rear !

Fair Ypres was a relic of the soul of other days,
A poet's dream, a wanderer's delight,
We will keep it as a symbol of your brute Teutonic ways
That millions yet unborn may come and curse you as
they gaze
At this token of your impotence and spite.

For shame, my Lord of Würtemberg! Across the
Flemish Fen

See where the little army calls you.

It's just the old familiar line of fifty thousand men,
They've beat you once or twice, my Lord, but venture
it again,

Come, try your luck, whatever fate befalls you.

Grouching

“ The army swore terribly in Flanders.”

UNCLE TOBY.

WHAT do the soldiers say ?
“ Dam ! Dam ! Dam !
I don’t mind cold, I don’t mind heat,
Over the top for a Sunday treat,
With Fritz I’ll always take my spell,
But I want my grub, and where in hell
Is the jam ? ”

What does the officer say ?
“ Dam ! Dam ! Dam !
Mud and misery, flies and stench,
Piggin’ it here in a beastly trench,
But what I mean, by Jove, you see,
I like my men and they don’t mind me,
So, on the whole, I’d rather be
Where I am.”

What does the enemy say ?
“ Kolossal Verdam !
They told me, when the war began,
The British Tommy always ran,
And so he does, just as they said,
But, *Donnerwetter* ! it’s straight ahead
Like a ram.”

What does the public say ?

“Dam ! Dam ! Dam !

They tax me here, they tax me there,
Bread is dear and the cupboard bare,
I'm bound to grouse, but if it's the way
To win the war, why then I'll pay
Like a lamb.”

The Volunteer

(1914-1919)

THE dreams are passed and gone, old man,
That came to you and me,
Of a six days' stunt on an east coast front,
And the Hun with his back to the sea.

Lord, how we worked and swotted sore
To be fit when the day should come !
Four years, my lad, and five months more,
Since first we followed the drum.

Though " Follow the drum " is a bit too grand,
For we ran to no such frills ;
It was just the whistles of Nature's band
That heartened us up the hills.

That and the toot of the corporal's flute,
Until he could blow no more,
And the lilt of " Sussex by the Sea,"
The marching song of the corps.

Those hills ! My word, you would soon get fit, —
Be you ever so stale and slack,
If you pad it with rifle and marching kit
To Rotherfield Hill and back !

Drills in hall, and drills outdoors,
And drills of every type,
Till we wore our boots with forming fours,
And our coats with "Shoulder hipe!"

No glory ours, no swank, no pay,
One dull eventless grind;
Find yourself, and nothing a day
Were the terms that the old boys signed.

Just drill and march and drill again,
And swot at the old parade,
But they got two hundred thousand men;
Not bad for the old brigade!

A good two hundred thousand came,
On the chance of that east coast fight;
They may have been old and stiff and lame,
But, by George, their hearts were right!

Discipline! My! "Eyes right!" they cried,
As we passed the drill hall door,
And left it at that—so we marched cock-eyed
From three to half-past four.

And solid! Why, after a real wet bout
In a hole in the Flanders mud,
It would puzzle the Boche to fetch us out,
For we couldn't get out if we would!

Some think we could have stood war's test,
Some say that we could not,
But a chap can only do his best,
And offer all he's got.

Fall out, the guard ! The old home guard !
Pile arms ! Right turn ! Dismiss !
No grousing, even if it's hard
To break our ranks like this.

We can't show much in the way of fun
For four and a half years gone ;
If we'd had our chance—just one ! just one !—
Carry on, old Sport, carry on !

The Night Patrol

SEPTEMBER 1918

BEHIND me on the darkened pier
They crowd and chatter, man and maid,
A coon-song gently strikes the ear,
A flapper giggles in the shade.
There where the in-turned lantern gleams
It shines on khaki and on brass ;
Across its yellow slanting beams
The arm-locked lovers slowly pass.

Out in the darkness one far light
Throbs like a pulse, and fades away—
Some signal on the guarded Wight,
From Helen's Point to Bembridge Bay.
An eastern wind blows chill and raw,
Cheerless and black the waters lie,
And as I gaze athwart the haze,
I see the night patrol go by.

Creeping shadows blur the gloom,
Thicken and darken, pass and fade ;
Again and yet again they loom,
One ruby spark above each shade—

Twelve ships in all ! They glide so near,
One hears the wave the fore-foot curled,
And yet to those upon the pier
They seem some other sterner world.

The coon-song whimpers to a wail,
The treble laughter sinks and dies,
The lovers cluster on the rail,
With whispered words and straining eyes.
One hush of awe, and then once more
The vision fades for them and me,
And there is laughter on the shore,
And silent duty on the sea.

The Bugles of Canada

[In war time a Canadian Division was encamped near my house. I used to fashion their bugle calls into the names of their distant land. Hence these verses.]

THE Farmer in the morning
 Stood with slanted head,
In the wintry dawning
 By the milking-shed ;
From the camp behind the hill
He could hear the bugles shrill,
 “ We are here ! We are here !
 Soldiers all !
 Good cheer ! We are near !
 Ontario ! Ontario !
 Toronto ! Montreal ! ”

Petherick, the Huntsman grey,
 Rheumatic, bent and blind,
Wheezed his joy as far away
 He heard it in the wind.
“ Hark the Hounds ! Hark the Hounds ! ”
 Nay, it is the bugle sounds,

“ We are here ! We are here !
Soldiers all !
Good cheer ! We are near !
Ontario ! Ontario !
Toronto ! Montreal ! ”

Lonely folk and fearful
Rose above their fears ;
Mothers, sad and tearful,
Were smiling through their tears ;
'Neath the cloudy English sky
They heard the cheering bugles cry,
“ We are here ! We are here !
Soldiers all !
We are near ! Good cheer !
Ontario ! Ontario !
Toronto ! Montreal ! ”

When the dusk was falling,
And the lamps alight,
You could hear them calling
In the misty night.
And old Sussex heard and blessed
The kindly greeting from the west,
“ We are here ! We are here !
Soldiers all !
We are near ! Good cheer !
Ontario ! Ontario !
Toronto ! Montreal ! ”

The Wreck on Loch McGarry

IF you should search all Scotland round,
The mainland, skerries, and the islands,
A grimmer spot could not be found
Than Loch McGarry in the Highlands.

Pent in by frowning mountains high,
It stretches silent as the tomb,
Turbid and thick its waters lie,
No eye can pierce their yellow gloom.

'Twas here that on a summer day
Four tourists hired a crazy wherry ;
No warning voices bade them stay,
As they pushed out on Loch McGarry.

McFarlane, Chairman of the Board,
A grim hard-fisted son of lucre,
His thoughts were ever on his hoard,
And life a money-game, like Euchre.

Bob Ainslie, late of London Town,
A spruce young butterfly of fashion,
A wrinkle in his dressing-gown
Would rouse an apoplectic passion.

John Waters, John the self-absorbed,
With thoughts for ever inward bent,
Complacent, self-contained, self-orbed,
Wrapped in eternal self-content.

Lastly coquettish Mrs. Wild,
Chattering, rowdy, empty-headed ;
At sight of her the whole world smiled,
Except the wretch whom she had wedded.

Such were the four who sailed that day,
To the Highlands each a stranger ;
Sunlit and calm the wide loch lay,
With not a hint of coming danger.

Drifting they watched the heather hue,
The waters and the cliffs that bound them ;
The air was still, the sky was blue,
Deceitful peace lay all around them.

McFarlane pondered on the stocks,
John Waters on his own perfection,
Bob Ainslie's thoughts were on his socks,
And Mrs. Wild's on her complexion.

When sudden—oh, that dreadful scream !
That cry from panic fear begotten !
The boat is gaping in each seam,
The worn-out planks are old and rotten.

With two small oars they work and strain,
A long mile from the nearer shore
They cease—their efforts are in vain ;
She's sinking fast, and all is o'er.

The yellow water, thick as pap,
Is crawling, crawling to the thwarts,
And as they mark its upward lap,
So fear goes crawling up their hearts.

Slowly, slowly, thick as pap,
The creeping yellow waters rise ;
Like drowning mice within a trap,
They stare around with frantic eyes.

Ah, how clearly they could see
Every sin and shame and error !
How they vowed that saints they'd be,
If delivered from this terror !

How they squirmed and how they squealed !
How they shouted for assistance !
How they fruitlessly appealed
To the shepherds in the distance !

How they sobbed and how they moaned,
As the waters kept encroaching !
How they wept and stormed and groaned,
As they saw their fate approaching !

And they vowed each good resolve
Should be permanent as granite,
Never, never, to dissolve,
Firm and lasting like our planet.

See them sit, aghast and shrinking !
Surely it could not be true !
“ Oh, have mercy ! Oh, we're sinking !
Oh, good Lord, what *shall* we do ! ”

Ah, it's coming ! Now she founders !
See the crazy wherry reel !
Downward to the rocks she flounders—
Just one foot beneath her keel !

In the shallow, turbid water
Lay the saving reef below.
Oh, the waste of high emotion !
Oh, the useless fear and woe !

Late that day four sopping tourists
To their quarters made their way,
And the brushes of Futurists
Scarce could paint their disarray.

And with half-amused compassion
They were viewed from the hotel,
From the pulp-clad beau of fashion,
To the saturated belle.

But a change was in their features,
And that change has come to tarry,
For they all are altered creatures
Since the wreck on Loch McGarry.

Now McFarlane never utters
Any talk of bills or bullion,
But continually mutters
Texts from Cyril or Tertullian.

As to Ainslie, he's not caring
How the new-cut collar lies,
And has been detected wearing
Dinner-jackets with white ties.

Waters, who had never thought
In his life of others' needs,
Has most generously bought
A nursing-home for invalids.

And the lady—ah, the lady !
She has turned from paths of sin,
And her husband's face so shady
Now is brightened by a grin.

So misfortunes of to-day
Are the blessings of to-morrow,
And the wisest cannot say
What is joy and what is sorrow.

If your soul is arable
 You can start this seed within it,
And my tiny parable
 May just help you to begin it.

The Bigot

THE foolish Roman fondly thought
That gods must be the same to all,
Each alien idol might be brought
Within their broad Pantheon Hall.
The vision of a jealous Jove
Was far above their feeble ken ;
They had no Lord who gave them love,
But scowled upon all other men.

But in our dispensation bright,
What noble progress have we made !
We know that we are in the light,
And outer races in the shade.
Our kindly creed ensures us this—
That Turk and infidel and Jew
Are safely banished from the bliss
That's guaranteed to me and you.

The Roman mother understood
That, if the babe upon her breast
Untimely died, the gods were good,
And the child's welfare manifest.
With tender guides the soul would go
And there, in some Elysian bower,
The tiny bud plucked here below
Would ripen to the perfect flower.

Poor simpleton ! Our faith makes plain
That, if no blest baptismal word
Has cleared the babe, it bears the stain
Which faithless Adam had incurred.
How philosophical an aim !

How wise and well-conceived a plan
Which holds the new-born babe to blame
For all the sins of early man !

Nay, speak not of its tender grace,
But hearken to our dogma wise :
Guilt lies behind that dimpled face,
And sin looks out from gentle eyes.
Quick, quick, the water and the bowl !
Quick with the words that lift the load !
Oh, hasten, ere that tiny soul
Shall pay the debt old Adam owed !

The Roman thought the souls that erred
Would linger in some nether gloom,
But somewhere, sometime, would be spared
To find some peace beyond the tomb.
In those dark halls, enshadowed, vast,
They flitted ever, sad and thin,
Mourning the unforgotten past
Until they shed the taint of sin.

And Pluto brooded over all
Within that land of night and fear,
Enthroned in some dark Judgment Hall,
A god himself, reserved, austere.

How thin and colourless and tame !
Compare our nobler scheme with it,
The howling souls, the leaping flame,
And all the tortures of the pit !

Foolish half-hearted Roman hell !
To us is left the higher thought
Of that eternal torture cell
Where to the sinner shall be brought.
Out with the thought that God could share
Our weak relenting pity sense,
Or ever condescend to spare
The wretch who gave Him just offence !

'Tis just ten thousand years ago
Since the vile sinner left his clay,
And yet no pity can he know,
For as he lies in hell to-day
So when ten thousand years have run
Still shall he lie in endless night.
O God of Love ! O Holy One !
Have we not read Thy ways aright ?

The godly man in heaven shall dwell,
And live in joy before the throne,
Though somewhere down in nether hell
His wife or children writhe and groan.
From his bright Empyrean height
He sees the reek from that abyss—
What Pagan ever dreamed a sight
So holy and sublime as this !

Poor foolish folk ! Had they begun
To weigh the myths that they professed,
One hour of reason and each one
Would surely stand a fraud confessed.
Pretending to believe each deed
Of Theseus or of Hercules,
With fairy tales of Ganymede,
And gods of rocks and gods of trees !

No, no, had they our purer light
They would have learned some saner tale
Of Balaam's ass, or Samson's might,
Or prophet Jonah and his whale,
Of talking serpents and their ways,
Through which our foolish parents strayed,
And how there passed three nights and days
Before the sun or moon was made !

.

O Bigotry, you crowning sin !
All evil that a man can do
Has earthly bounds, nor can begin
To match the mischief done by you—
You, who would force the source of love
To play your small sectarian part,
And mould the mercy from above
To fit your own contracted heart.

The Athabasca Trail

MY life is gliding downwards, it speeds swifter to
the day

When it shoots the last dark cañon to the Plains of
Far-away,

But while its stream is running through the years that
are to be,

The mighty voice of Canada will ever call to me.

I shall hear the roar of rivers where the rapids foam and
tear,

I shall smell the virgin upland with its balsam-laden air,
And shall dream that I am riding down the winding
woody vale

With the packer and the packhorse on the Athabasca
Trail.

I have passed the warden cities at the Eastern water-
gate

Where the hero and the martyr laid the corner stone of
State,

The habitant, *coureur-des-bois*, and hardy voyageur—
Where lives a breed more strong at need to venture or
endure ?

I have seen the gorge of Erie where the roaring waters
run,

I have crossed the Inland Ocean, lying golden in the sun,
But the last and best and sweetest is the ride by hill
and dale

With the packer and the packhorse on the Athabasca
Trail.

I'll dream again of fields of grain that stretch from sky
to sky

And the little prairie hamlets where the cars go roaring
by,

Wooden hamlets as I saw them—noble cities still to be,
To girdle stately Canada with gems from sea to sea.

Mother of a mighty manhood, land of glamour and of
hope,

From the eastward sea-swept islands to the sunny
western slope,

Ever more my heart is with you, ever more till life shall
fail

I'll be out with pack and packer on the Athabasca Trail.

Ragtime !

[" During the catastrophe the band of the *Titanic* played negro melodies and ragtime until the last moment, when they broke into a hymn."—DAILY PAPER.]

RAGTIME ! Ragtime ! Keep it going still !
Let them hear the ragtime ! Play it with a will !
Women in the lifeboats, men upon the wreck,
Take heart to hear the ragtime lilting down the deck.

Ragtime ! Ragtime ! Yet another tune !
Now the " Darkey Dandy," now " The Yellow Coon ! "
Brace against the bulwarks if the stand's askew,
Find your footing as you can, but keep the music true !

There's glowing hell beneath us where the shattered
boilers roar,
The ship is listing and awash, the boats will hold no
more !

There's nothing more that you can do, and nothing you
can mend,
Only keep the ragtime playing to the end.

Don't forget the time, boys ! Eyes upon the score !
Never heed the wavelets sobbing down the floor !
Play it as you played it when with eager feet
A hundred pair of dancers were stamping to the beat.

Stamping to the ragtime down the lamp-lit deck,
With shine of glossy linen and with gleam of snowy neck,
They've other thoughts to think to-night, and other
things to do,
But the tinkle of the ragtime may help to see them
through.

Shut off, shut off the ragtime ! The lights are falling
low !
The deck is buckling under us ! She's sinking by the
bow !
One hymn of hope from dying hands on dying ears to
fall—
Gently the music fades away—and so, God rest us all !

Christmas in Trouble

1916

CHEER oh, comrades! we can bide the blast
And face the gloom until it shall grow lighter.
What though one Christmas should be overcast,
If duty done makes all the others brighter.

1917

THE LAST LAP

We seldom were quick off the mark,
And sprinting was never our game;
But when it's insistence and hold-for-the-distance,
We've never been beat at that same.

The first lap was all to the Hun,
At the second we still saw his back;
But we knew how to wait and to spurt down the
straight,
Till we left him dead-beat on the track.

He's a bluffer for all he is worth,
But he's winded and done to the core,
So the last lap is here, with the tape very near,
And the old colours well to the fore.

1918

Not merry ! No—the words would grate,
With gaps at every table-side,
But chastened, thankful, calm, sedate,
Be your victorious Christmas-tide.

1921

“ Now for Peace and now for plenty ! ”
So we said in 1920.
Alas there followed fire and flood,
1920 proved a dud.

But we were not to be done,
“ Stand by now for '21 ! ”
Economic strife and bother !
It was dudder than the other.

Well we raise our peckers still,
'22 may fill the bill,
When old Ireland troubles not,
And the Trotskys cease to trot.

We hope so—and we wear meanwhile
Our patent shock-absorbing smile,
But whatever fate may do,
We send our greeting out to you.

To Carlo

(DIED JULY 1921)

N O truer, kinder soul
Was ever sped than thine.
You lived without a growl,
You died without a whine.

To Ronald Ross

[Who was torpedoed in the Gulf of Corinth in 1917, and was thus enabled to visit Parnassus.]

I 'VE read of many poets, Latin, Greek,
And bards of Tarragona or Toledo,
But you, dear Ross, are surely quite unique,
Blown to Parnassus by a Boche torpedo.

Little Billy

THE Doctor came at half-past one,
Little Billy saw him from the window.
The Doctor he was short and fat,
He hid a trumpet in his hat,
And spoke with his ear. You may all doubt that,
But Little Billy saw it from the window.

The Doctor left at half-past four,
Little Billy saw him from the window.
The Doctor's head was white and bare,
Like an ostrich egg in a nest of hair,
The marble bounced right up in the air
When little Billy dropped it from the window.

The Doctor came with a small black bag,
Little Billy saw it from the window.
And what do you think he had in that ?
Why, a great big howling, yowling brat,
With a voice like a discontented cat.
Little Billy heard it from the window.

And that's how the new brother came,
While little Billy waited at the window.
"Who would have thought that Brother Jack
Would yell like that! They ought to pack
Him into the bag and send him back,"
Said angry little Billy at the window.

Take Heart

WHEN our souls are filled with fear,
When the path is dull and drear,
When the wind is chill and strong,
When the way is rough and long,
Take heart !

When vague terror fills our breast,
When forebodings break our rest,
When we search for any light
In the black encircling night,
Take heart !

When with feeble hands we grope
For some faint elusive hope,
When we wander hand in hand,
Through the gloomy twilight land,
Take heart !

Courage, comrade ! Courage still !
We will breast the weary hill !
Hand in hand we scale the height,
Till we reach the golden light.
Take heart !

Retrospect

THERE is a better thing, dear heart,
Than youthful flush or girlish grace.
There is the faith that never fails,
The courage in the danger place,
The duty seen, and duty done,
The heart that yearns for all in need,
The lady soul which could not stoop
To selfish thought or lowly deed.
All that we ever dreamed, dear wife,
Seems drab and common by the truth,
The sweet sad mellow things of life
Are more than golden dreams of youth.

Comrades

YOU can read their names in the list of games
In the school of long ago.
Henderson A. and Wilson J.
And Marriott W. O.

They ragged and fought as schoolboys ought,
And learned to play the game.
You can act the fool at an English school,
But it builds you all the same.
Verses you plan which fail to scan
And your French is none too good,
But you learn to shape as a gentleman,
And to do as a Briton should.

For there's something there, in the sober air,
And the reek of the mellow place,
Which seems to hold the instincts old,
And the soul of an ancient race.
Where Latin and Greek are far to seek
There is home-made lore for you,
The thing that's fair, and the thing that's square,
And the thing no chap can do.

Gothic and grim, in the transept dim
Of the chapel grey and old
There's a marbled shrine where line on line
The dead boys' names are scrolled.
They gave their dreams of what might be
For the sake of the things that are,
When the joyous strife of their glad young life
Had changed to the strife of war.

But there they be, the comrades three,
As in the long ago,
Henderson A. and Wilson J.
And Marriott W. O.

Lindisfaire

HORSES go down the dingy lane,
But never a horse comes up again.
The greasy yard where the red hides lie
Marks the place where the horses die.

Wheat was sinking year by year,
I bought things cheap, I sold them dear ;
Rent was heavy and taxes high,
And a weary-hearted man was I.

In Lindisfaire I walked my grounds,
I hadn't the heart to ride to hounds,
And as I walked in black despair,
I saw my old bay hunter there.

He tried to nuzzle against my cheek,
He looked the grief he could not speak,
But no caress came back again,
For harder times make harder men.

My thoughts were set on stable rent,
On money saved and money spent,
On weekly bills for forage lost,
And all the old bay hunter cost.

For though a flier in the past,
His days of service long were past,
His gait was stiff, his eyes were dim,
And I could find no use for him.

I turned away with heart of gloom,
And sent for Will, my father's groom,
The old, old groom, whose worn-out face
Was like the fortune of our race.

I gave my order sharp and hard,
"Go, ride him to the knacker's yard ;
He'll fetch two pounds, it may be three ;
Sell him— and bring the price to me."

I saw the old groom wince away,
He looked the thoughts he dared not say ;
Then from his fob he slowly drew
A leather pouch of faded hue.

"Master," said he, "my means are small,
This purse of leather holds them all,
But I have neither kith nor kin,
I'll pay your price for Prince's skin.

"My brother rents the Nether Farm,
And he will hold him safe from harm
In the great field where he may graze,
And see the finish of his days."

With dimming eyes I saw him stand,
Two pounds were in his shaking hand ;
I gave a curse to drown the sob,
And thrust the purse within his fob.

“ May God do this and more to me
If we should ever part, we three,
Master and horse and faithful friend,
We’ll share together to the end ! ”

You’ll think I’m playing it on you,
I give my word the thing is true ;
I hadn’t hardly made the vow,
Before I heard a view-halloo.

And, looking round, whom should I see,
But Bookie Johnson hailing me ;
Johnson, the man who bilked the folks
When Ethelrida won the Oaks.

He drew a wad from out his vest,
“ Here are a thousand of the best ;
Luck’s turned a bit with me of late,
And, as you see, I’m getting straight.”

That’s all. My luck was turning too.
If you have nothing else to do,
Run down some day to Lindisfaire,
You’ll find the old bay hunter there.

A Parable

HIGH-BROW HOUSE was furnished well
With many a goblet fair ;
So when they brought the Holy Grail,
There was never a space to spare.
Simple Cottage was clear and clean,
With room to store at will ;
So there they laid the Holy Grail,
And there you'll find it still.

Fate

I KNOW not how I know,
And yet I know.
I do not plan to go,
And yet I go.
There is some dim force propelling,
Gently guiding and compelling,
And a faint voice ever telling
"This is so."

The path is rough and black—
Dark as night—
And there lies a fairer track
In the light.
Yet I may not shirk or shrink,
For I feel the hands that link
As they guide me on the brink
Of the Height.

Bigots blame me in their wrath,
Let them blame !
Praise or blame, the fated path
Is the same.
If I droop upon my mission,
There is still that saving vision,
Iridescent and Elysian,
Tipped in flame.

It was granted me to stand
 By my dead.
I have felt the vanished hand
 On my head,
On my brow the vanished lips,
And I know that Death's eclipse
Is a floating veil that slips,
 Or is shed.

When I heard thy well-known voice,
 Son of mine,
Should I silently rejoice,
 Or incline
To strike harder as a fighter,
That the heavy might be lighter,
And the gloomy might be brighter
 At the sign ?

Great Guide, I ask you still,
 "Wherefore I ?"
But if it be thy will
 That I try,
Trace my pathway among men,
Show me how to strike, and when,
Take me to the fight—and then,
 Oh, be nigh !

The Journey

*A well in an arid, rocky spot. At the back a winding path.
Beyond a rugged mountain, the summit of which is
draped in clouds.*

*Round the well sit the Faith family, who are the hereditary
guides upon the journey. Beside them sits an
iridescent, evasive creature who is Inspiration. A little
apart sits Reason, a stern greybeard. Aloof from
them all sits Science, working with a battery and some
wires.*

*The Faith family are clad in various garbs, all with
a suspicion of sacerdotalism, either Mahometan,
Buddhist, or Christian.*

FAITH 1. What a blessing it is that we are appointed guides upon the journey ! What would the poor people do without us !

ALL. Ah, what *would* they do without us !

FAITH 1. They would never reach the City Beautiful at all. They would all wander off upon the way.

FAITH 2. They would die in the great salt marsh of Sin.

FAITH 3. Or be starved in the Jungle of Disbelief, or fall over the Precipice of Schism.

FAITH 4. Well, it depends upon what you call Schism.

FAITH 1. Hush ! we need not go into that. Perhaps

we had best agree to drop the subject as it has led to so much trouble in the past. We all know in our own hearts what we mean by Schism.

ALL. [*Glaring at each other*] Yes, we know that.

FAITH 2. Allow me to tell you what Schism is——

FAITH 1. No, no, let us change the subject! The road is very quiet to-day. We have not had many to guide.

FAITH 2. So many guide themselves these days and don't want any help from us.

FAITH 3. Poor creatures! I wonder what befalls them.

FAITH 1. And so many never know that they are on a journey at all, and simply wander downwards or round and round the mountain instead of trying to get to the city at the top.

FAITH 2. Deplorable! Deplorable! We can but go among them and point them upwards.

FAITH 3. This is an important camping ground. I thought of erecting a sign-post, so that if I should not be there it would point the way.

ALL. Admirable! Splendid! Let us have a sign-post.

FAITH 3. See [*produces a crossed stick*], I have actually made one. [*Rises*] I will put it on the rock there so that it may point due east.

FAITH 2. But that is the wrong way.

FAITH 1. Of course it is.

FAITH 3. It is the right way.

OTHERS. No, no! Wrong! Wrong!

FAITH 1. Why, if he went that way he would be up

to his neck in the quagmire of Superstition and never win his way through.

FAITH 3. You are talking nonsense. How would you go ?

FAITH 1. That way ! [*pointing*].

FAITH 2. No, that way ! [*pointing*].

FAITH 3. And both of them right over the edge of the Precipice of Schism and down into the Valley of Damnation.

FAITH 1. Keep a civil tongue, if you please.

FAITH 3. I will testify to what I know to be truth.

FAITH 2. Bigoted, obstinate ass ! How do you know that it is truth ?

FAITH 3. Because I was told long ago by Inspiration. You told me, Inspiration ?

INSPIR. Yes, I told you. Quite right. I told you.

FAITH 3. You hear her. She told me. I have never allowed myself to question it. The way is really quite straight. What you imagine to be the quagmire of Superstition is really the pleasant Valley of Tradition. You can't go wrong, for you can guide yourself by the church steeple, which can always be seen. Somewhere on the hills beyond lies the City.

FAITH 4. By Allah, I could smite you with this staff when I hear such talk. You would surely lead the poor wayfarers to Gehenna. A great guide of old named Mahomet showed me the way, and as I learned it, so I teach it.

FAITH 2. But who showed it to him ?

FAITH 4. Surely it was Inspiration.

INSPIR. Yes, yes, I showed it to him. It is right as I showed it.

FAITH 4. You go eastwards, it is true, but you take your bearings from a town named Mecca, and pass over the plain of Pious Observance, until at last the minarets of the great City rise before you.

FAITH 1. No, no, my good friend. You're very earnest, I admit, but I wouldn't trust your guide, and I think our mutual friend Inspiration was less happy than usual if she ever suggested such a route.

FAITH 2. Well, how do you direct the travellers ?

FAITH 1. Well, I start them from the beginning at the gate of the Baptistry. There the path is clear enough, and I see that every one of them has a book which will tell them the right way if they are in doubt.

FAITH 4. But who wrote the book ?

FAITH 1. It was Inspiration who wrote it. You did, did you not ?

INSPIR. Oh yes, the book is mine.

FAITH 4. And my guide book. You wrote that ?

INSPIR. Certainly. I wrote that also.

REASON. [*Stepping forward.*] Might I be permitted to say a word or two ?

FAITH 1. Certainly not.

FAITH 2. It's that old bore Reason.

FAITH 3. We don't know the fellow.

FAITH 4. I can hardly keep my hands off him.

REASON. It's true that you and I parted company many, many centuries ago. I don't think we were ever very friendly, so far as I can remember.

FAITH 1. I should hope not indeed.

FAITH 2. We have nothing to do with you.

FAITH 3. You are getting much too forward nowadays.

FAITH 4. The sharp edge of a sword is what my ancestors gave you.

FAITH 1. Indeed! We used always to burn the fellow.

FAITH 2. We merely ignore his existence. We look on him as bad form.

REASON. Still, whether you burn me or ignore me, I am still there, you know. You can't really get away from me. Now do please answer a question or two, will you?

FAITH 1. No flippancy—nothing offensive!

REASON. Certainly not. I have, I assure you, every respect for you—that is to say for your motives, though not for your proceedings.

FAITH 2. Pray, what do you mean by that?

REASON. I mean that you all are very earnest and have the best intentions.

FAITH 3. [*Sardonically.*] We thank you most humbly.

REASON. You only need my co-operation to be most valuable.

FAITH 4. Rascally infidel!

FAITH 1. What characteristic modesty!

FAITH 2. You were always a detestable prig.

FAITH 3. And how, pray, could you improve us?

REASON. I would bid you beware of this hussy Inspiration. Can't you see that she is fooling you? Is it not clear that she has given you half a dozen contradictory directions, and that they can't all be the right one?

INSPIR. Blasphemy ! Blasphemy ! Burn the rascal !

FAITH 1. One is the right one. The others are delusions.

REASON. Then which is the right one ?

ALL. Mine.

REASON. You see ! Each of you believes that his comrades have been deceived. Don't you think it more likely that you have all been deceived.

INSPIR. Oh, villainy ! Blasphemy ! I knew that you put that rack away too soon. Has no one got a pincers about him ?

FAITH 1. If it were not for us, who would guide the travellers ?

REASON. But you all guide them in different directions, and spend most of your time abusing each other.

FAITH 2. At least we all point them upwards.

REASON. Exactly. You all point them upwards. There is your merit. But I would point them upwards also, without pretending that only one path can lead to the City. All upward paths will take you equally to the high places. Inspiration has been no help to you. She has only set you all by the ears.

INSPIR. Atrocious ! Horrible ! What are we coming to ? Don't wait here or he will contaminate you. Away ! Away ! The fellow is dangerous.

FAITH 1. Come on, my friends. This is most unedifying talk.

FAITH 2. The fellow always gives me a headache.

FAITH 3. We should be simple travellers like the rest if he had his way.

FAITH 4. And Mecca like any other town. May

Allah confound you and guide you down the Valley of Gehenna. [Exeunt.]

[*All this time Science has been absorbed in his work.*]

REASON. Hullo, Science! [*No answer.*] Hullo, old Science! [*No answer.*] Bless the fellow, he is always absorbed in his own dreams. [*Goes across and touches him.*]

SCIENCE. Get away! Don't interrupt me!

REASON. You *are* a grumpy fellow.

SCIENCE. Oh, it's you, Reason. I don't mind you. I look on you as a friend. I thought it was one of those Faith people, for I heard them all chattering behind me.

REASON. What did you think of what they said?

SCIENCE. I am far too busy to think of what they say.

REASON. But I thought that you and they were getting much more friendly. Some of the travellers told me so of late.

SCIENCE. Well, I don't know. We should get along very well if it were not for that hussy Inspiration.

REASON. You don't seem to love her any more than I do.

SCIENCE. She raises a scream against everything I do. She accuses me of contradicting her. Such a touchy person, she is. Then they all take her side. I am cold-shouldered by them all. But the fact is, my dear Reason, I am so useful to them all that they can't get on without me. The travellers all say, whatever difference there may be about our path, it is certainly made very much more convenient and comfortable by this hard-working old fellow. I don't give them promises only. They actually see and feel what I do

When old Faith tries to read his guide book in the dark, it is I who give him his electric torch. When his eyes give way—and they are all getting a bit senile, you know—it is I who correct them with glasses. So they don't pay too much attention to the cries of Inspiration, and they actually admit that they mistook her meaning and that there is no real difference of opinion.

REASON. That's better than being burned at the stake. In old Giordano Bruno's time you and I used to blaze together. We are getting a little of our own back now. What are you working at ?

SCIENCE. I was plotting out a power station to light the travellers in the dark places of the path.

REASON. And where do *you* think the path leads to ?

SCIENCE. Oh, I know nothing of such matters.

REASON. Well, you at least know that you exist.

SCIENCE. Nothing of the sort. I may be altogether subjective. I may be somebody's dream.

REASON. Oh, come, come ! Cheer up ! Is there nothing solid you can get hold of ?

SCIENCE. Nothing reliable. I used to work things down to the atom. Now it is the electron. I suspect it will end in the ether. There is no finality.

REASON. But a purposeful force behind it all ?

SCIENCE. Pure impersonal laws.

REASON. Which made themselves ?

SCIENCE. Exactly.

REASON. Ah, there you and I must agree to differ.

SCIENCE. When you differ from me, you cease to be yourself.

REASON. The older you grow, the more dogmatic you

get. You know, you old rascal, if you got the upper hand, you are capable of burning a few people on your own account.

SCIENCE. Don't be funny! I am trying to work.

REASON. But you are an honest and useful old chap. A little limited and a bit inhuman—that's all. You should marry Imagination.

SCIENCE. Half-sister of Inspiration. Thank you, I have had quite enough of that family.

REASON. You'd do her good—and she you.

SCIENCE. Well, I must go and fix up this installation. Don't forget that you are rather limited yourself. Here are some travellers coming. Where's that voltmeter? And the induction coil? Thank you. Well, if you like to travel with me, come along! [Exeunt.]

[Enter a man and a woman.]

THE MAN. Thank heaven that we have shaken off the guides. They make my head ache with their chatter.

THE WOMAN. And yet, dear, they all point us upwards.

THE MAN. Some of them seemed to me to be going downwards themselves.

THE WOMAN. We must go as they point.

THE MAN. Yes, woman seems to need a guide.

THE WOMAN. We are lost without one. I like a guide and one who is sure of himself—one who has no doubt that he knows the way.

THE MAN. Whether he really does or not?

THE WOMAN. One can at least hope that what he says is truth.

THE MAN. Well, I used to trust them. But they differed so much that I took to guiding myself with the

little help that old Reason could give me. Let us rest by this well.

THE WOMAN. Yes, let us rest. Oh, it is a weary, weary journey.

THE MAN. We have love to help us along—and that is more than many can say.

THE WOMAN. Yes, if love were not with us, I should indeed despair. Love has been our true helper.

THE MAN. And yet, do you remember that pale sad-faced creature who has walked again and again so very close to us ?

THE WOMAN. You mean Sorrow.

THE MAN. Exactly. Sorrow. I am not sure that she is not the best guide of all. We seem to have risen higher always when she has been our companion.

THE WOMAN. It is true. I shudder when I think of her, and yet she has surely helped us upon our way. How pale and weary the poor child is ! [*Looks at child.*]

THE MAN. Put him here among the ferns.

THE WOMAN. He is worn out. Rest there, my darling!

THE MAN. She was with us when our boy died.

THE WOMAN. And that night, as we sat together hand in hand, each thinking of the other's grief, then and only then did we seem for one moment, as we looked upwards, to see some break in the clouds and to know that there was indeed something there which makes the long journey worth while.

THE MAN. Yes, I felt that. I saw the City. Just for a moment I seemed to see the shining walls. [*Looks at the boy.*] Dear laddie, how weary he is ! Should we wake him and give him food ?

THE WOMAN. Let him rest. He can have food when he wakes. I am so very tired.

THE MAN. Dear heart, what a comrade you have been! Poor little feet, worn out by tramping at my side.

THE WOMAN. But oh, it was worth it, my own man who never gave a thought to himself.

THE MAN. How could I when—— Hullo, who are these?

[Three roisterers come singing down the path.]

THE MAN. Heh, friends! you are going the wrong way.

A ROISTERER. What d'you mean, the wrong way? How the deuce do you know where we want to get to?

THE MAN. Surely you want to get up to the City Beautiful, like the rest of us.

ROISTERER. Not much. We've tried that game, and it won't work. No, no, my friend, you can do the climbing and hunt for something which is up in the clouds of dreamland. Give us something solid.

2ND ROISTERER. That's the idea. Something solid. What's the use of talking about things that are far away. We want to enjoy ourselves here and now. One City of pleasure down in the plain is worth many City Beautifuls up on the hill-top. Come on, my lads!

3RD ROISTERER. You look tired out. No wonder, when you are climbing all the time. It's much easier to go down hill with us.

THE MAN. But you only have to come back again.

ROISTERER. Oh, bother the fellow. He's a kill-joy. Come on, boys. We'll have a rare time down there.

THE MAN. No, no, don't be foolish. You've got so far. You are bound sooner or later to get to the top. What is the use of going down when you will have all the climbing to do over again.

ROISTERER. That's the future. Hang the future! We're in the present.

2ND ROISTERER. But there's something in what the fellow says. We were not started on this journey for the purpose of having a good time, were we? We were started that we might get to the top.

3RD ROISTERER. Well, I want some liquor, and I am going down for it. Come on, Jack, if you are coming.

2ND ROISTERER. No, I think I'll start up the hill again. I remember what my mother used to say——

ROISTERER. Oh, bother your mother! Come on, Tom. Leave the milksop here, if he wants to stay.

[The two go on down the hill. The other goes slowly up.]

THE MAN. Poor souls! I've been down before now myself.

THE WOMAN. Yes, we have all done it and learned our lesson.

[Enter Sorrow, who sits unobserved on rock at back.]

THE MAN. Are you less weary now, dear?

THE WOMAN. Yes, yes, if only the little fellow is rested we can soon go on.

THE MAN. Do you remember, dear, that when we lost our way, and when it was so dark as we crossed the great marsh of Doubt, I told you that the best guide was our dear little dead lad whom I saw in front of us?

THE WOMAN. Yes, I saw him too.

THE MAN. I asked old Science about it. He said it was impossible.

THE WOMAN. Yes, but when you asked him the second time, Science was not so sure about it. At first he thought Imagination had a hand in it. But when he learned that we both saw it, and that Imagination was not present at all, he was more serious about it.

THE MAN. Yes, but since then I have seen our boy again and again. He is still living, and he is leading us to the City Beautiful, for he has found his own way there. [*Looks round.*] Who is that over there ?

THE WOMAN. It looks like Sorrow.

THE MAN. I'm afraid of that woman. I wish she would not come with us.

THE WOMAN. But she did help us up. Let us ask her to the well.

THE MAN. Won't you come and join us at the well ?

[*Sorrow advances and sits down.*]

THE WOMAN. Poor thing ! You'll reach the City some day, will you not ?

SORROW. No, there is no place for me there. I am stationed on the path. You will always find me there.

THE WOMAN. Every one avoids you, and is afraid of you.

SORROW. And yet those who have known me make better progress than those who have not.

THE MAN. Yes, I have known some people who said that they had never met Sorrow, and they were not people whom I wish to travel with. Their hearts were hard to others for they could not understand. Now, dear, if you are rested, we must go on.

THE WOMAN. Yes, dear, we must go on. [*Goes to the child.*] Oh, John, John, our little boy is dead !

THE MAN. My God ! Oh, my poor, poor wife !

THE WOMAN. John, dear John, it will break your great heart.

[*They embrace each other and weep.*]

[*Sorrow blesses them and moves slowly away.*]

THE MAN. Well, it is the darkest pass of all. How black it looks above our heads !

THE WOMAN. But surely I see the upward path more clearly.

THE MAN. Yes, yes, see how it winds over the shoulder of the hill. And see the Towers of the City. Never have we seen it so clearly. Come, while the way is open.

THE WOMAN. Can we leave our bairn ?

THE MAN. Remember the other. He is ahead of us on the path. We have two guides, not one. Come, brave comrade, come !

[*They place their cloak over the child and turn to ascend the path.*]

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